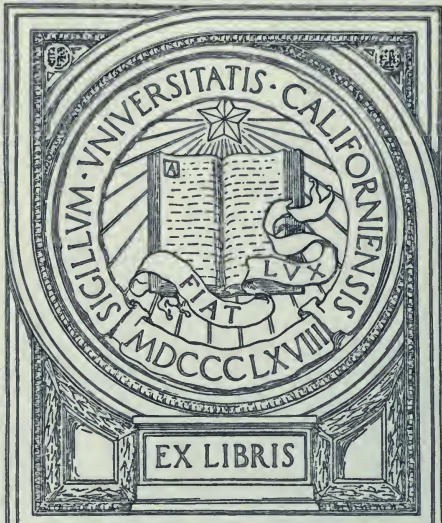


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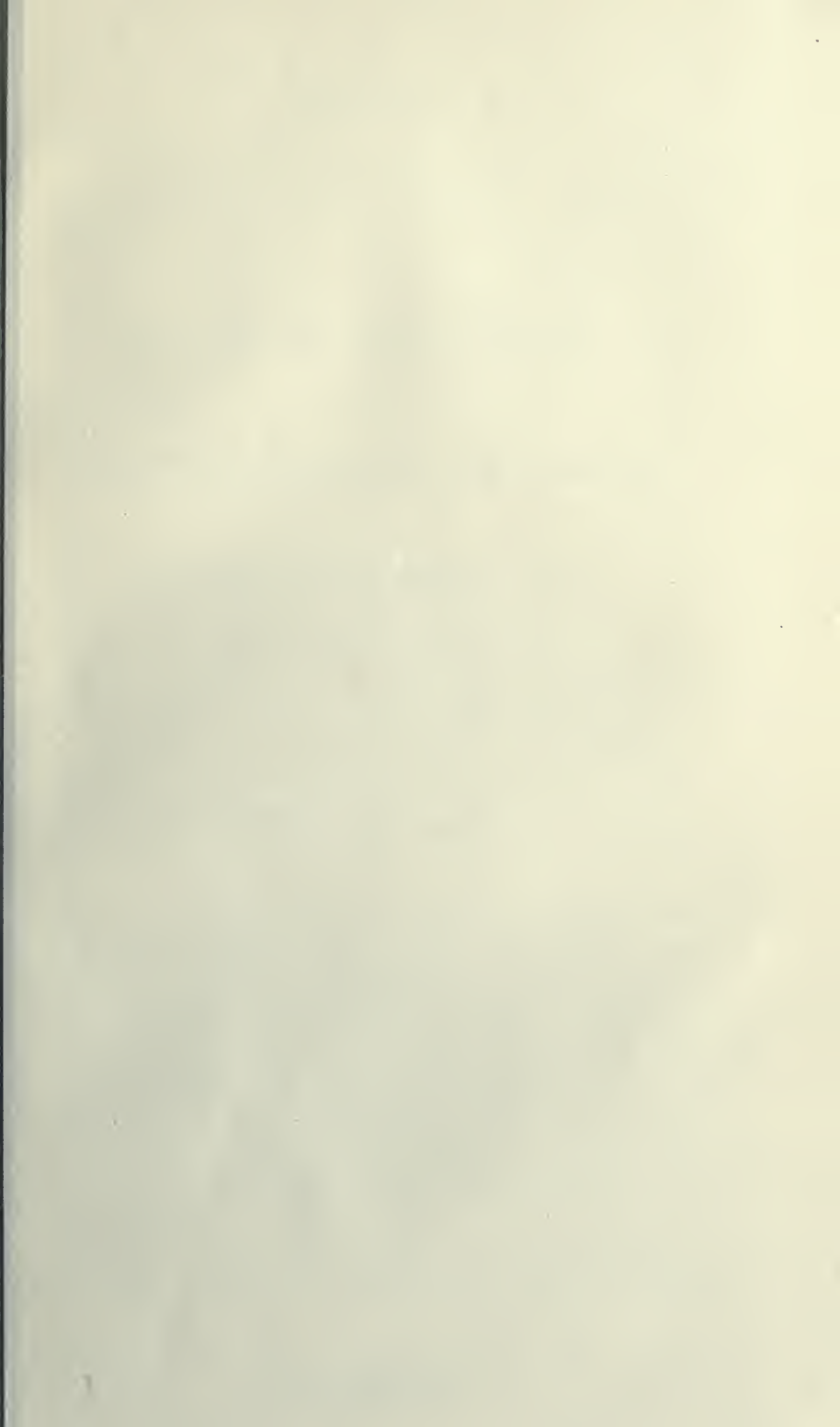
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American Tract Society

## REPORT OF COLPORTAGE

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IN

Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina,

FOR

THE YEAR ENDING MARCH 1, 1855.

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In reviewing the labors of the agents and colporteurs of the American Tract Society in Virginia, and North and South Carolina, the past year, we have great reason to thank God and take courage, as more has been accomplished, and we believe in a more effectual manner, than in any previous year. Another cause of thankfulness is, that out of nearly one hundred colporteurs employed on this field none have died, although the work has been somewhat retarded by sickness.

On the 7th of April, a Colporteur Convention assembled in Wilmington, North Carolina, at which ten agents and colporteurs were present, which continued in session eight hours a day for two days, besides meetings each night. During the sessions personal narratives were given by all the brethren present, and the principles of the Society were fully discussed. The colporteurs gave a full account of the wants of their different fields of labor, and some of them so daguerreotyped the moral destitutions of large portions of their fields that Christian hearts bled while looking at the picture. As an evidence of the interest felt in the work, and its adaptation to that State, the good people of Wilmington gave nearly \$900 in donations to carry it forward.

On the 18th of May, another Convention was held at Charleston, Kanawha county, Virginia, at which eight laborers in this work were

present, when the same course was pursued as at Wilmington. The fields of the colporteurs who attended, embraced about fourteen counties of South-western Virginia. The men were natives of the counties, and well acquainted with them. In two or three of those counties, there was but one church-building of any kind to accommodate the population of a broken, mountainous country, and the preaching they had was held in the log cabins, at most but once in each month. Several of the other counties had but two, few of them more than three houses of worship, and most of them could only accommodate from fifty to one hundred hearers; while they are generally so open, that they cannot be occupied at all in the winter. The sparseness of the population prevents the possibility of sustaining either week-day or Sunday-schools; hence multitudes are growing up in ignorance, and even those that can read have been found almost entirely destitute of all kinds of books, except so far as they had been supplied by the Bible and Tract Societies. There are no bookstores within reach of them, and there is no motive for book-pedlars to visit them, as they are destitute of means to buy books; and in no way can they have religious reading, but by the hand of charity. Some of the colporteurs stated that they had travelled a whole week without selling twenty-five cents' worth of books.

Two-thirds of the families in some counties had no books of any kind except a Bible, and a book given by a former colporteur, both, in many instances, much worn by use, but as well taken care of as possible; while many new families had sprung up destitute of all kinds of books. With very few exceptions, books have been received most gratefully, and in many cases with tears of joy on the part of mothers and children. One-third of the families in some of those counties seldom or never heard the gospel preached. Children from twelve to fifteen years old had never seen a preacher or heard a prayer till offered by the colporteur, and many were never in a school till taken to a Sabbath-school raised up by one of these laborers. More than two hundred Sabbath-schools have been aided by donations of books, or new ones organized in destitute places.

During the meeting, numerous facts were related of the most encouraging character, showing the good done by books and tracts. I cannot forbear relating one or two, as they came from persons not connected with the Society.

A Mr. McC——, who lived some miles distant, attended closely all the time of our meeting. When we were about closing, he requested the privilege of making a statement, which was readily



granted. He said, twenty years ago he was a very wicked, thoughtless man. While at the Kanawha salines one day, a Mr. R—— handed him a card-tract; as soon as he got out of sight he read it, and it made him think seriously. He read it again and again, till he thought he read it one hundred times over; and the Holy Spirit blessed it to his soul. He at once commenced family worship; his wife was awakened by it and embraced Christ; and now he had six children and eight servants hopefully pious, as the result of the divine blessing on that tract. He told the story with an overflowing heart—and closed with handing me a liberal donation.

Another immediately rose and stated that about the same time of this man's conversion, a celebrated pugilist lived in his region, who was the dread of the whole community. When the new county of L—— was laid out, the place to build the court-house was disputed very warmly, and it was agreed that Mr. B—— and another bully should fight for the location. Mr. B—— gained it, and the house was built as the result. He was frequently indicted for breaches of the peace. Judge S——, who was then judge of the court, had to try him on three indictments at one time, and when he pronounced sentence on him, said that if ever B—— came before him again he would imprison him, as he considered him a dangerous man: he then handed him two tracts, and told him to read them, and he hoped they would make him a better man. The reading resulted in his conversion; he soon commenced preaching the gospel, and for twenty years he had been one of the most devoted, useful men in the county. He had recently died in the faith of the gospel, lamented by all that knew him.

At the close of this Convention, the Rev. Dr. B——'s congregation gave near \$300 to aid the cause. The Doctor, who acted as secretary of the Convention, said he knew the great destitution of Western Virginia, and that we ought to have a colporteur permanently located in each county, to visit every family two or three times a year, supply them with books and tracts, read the Bible to them, and pray for them and with them.

I have been particular in stating the moral condition of a few of those counties; but there are nearly forty counties in Virginia little better supplied with religious influences, and more than that number of counties in North Carolina are equally destitute, while the obstacles are much greater.

There have been 57 colporteurs laboring in Virginia the whole or a part of the year, the actual time being twenty-six years of labor.

We have visited 28,340 families ; religious conversation or prayer have been held with 14,585 ; of the whole number visited, 1,195 attended no place of worship ; 788 families had no Bibles ; 1,714 no religious books except the Bible ; 40,313 volumes have been sold, and 15,854 volumes given to the poor and destitute ; and 1,434 meetings have been held for devotional purposes. The entire cost of the work in Virginia has been \$8,855 10. Donations raised to pay expenses, \$7,066 44.

In North Carolina, the colporteurs have visited 18,555 families ; prayed with 10,375 ; found 1,542 families habitually neglecting the house of God ; 1,001 destitute of the Bible ; 2,288 destitute of all religious books except the Bible ; they have sold 22,978 volumes ; have given to the poor 7,951 volumes, and held 740 religious meetings. Thirty-one colporteurs have labored the whole or part of the year, making eleven years one month and twenty-three days ; total cost of services and expenses, \$3,348 29. Mr. W. J. W. CROWDER will hereafter collect donations to aid the cause in North Carolina.

In South Carolina, the work is but fairly begun. Eight colporteurs have labored part of the past year, and we find the same need for labor there as in Virginia and North Carolina, and have no doubt there is the same ground of encouragement. Mr. E. L. KERRISON, of Charleston, a retired merchant, has undertaken the work of superintending colportage in that state, Georgia, and Eastern Florida. He is a man of systematic business habits, and will devote all his energies to the work without any compensation except the luxury of doing good.

During the year I have travelled over 8,000 miles, and have attended colporteur conventions in St. Louis, Chicago, and Charleston ; in addition to those in North Carolina and Western Virginia. These have been large meetings, of deep interest, and of vast importance to the cause of Christ. In all these meetings the necessity and practicability of this union system of effort have been fully developed. The system of colportage as conducted by the American Tract Society stands higher now in the estimation of the people of my field than it ever did, and notwithstanding the commercial embarrassments of the past year, more has been given than in any previous year.

We now enter upon another year with a larger number of experienced colporteurs than we ever had, and with better information as to the most destitute portions of this great field. Two very efficient General Agents of the Society, the Rev. S. R. SLACK of the Protest-

ant Episcopal church, and Rev. M. T. SUMNER of the Baptist church, whose reports follow this, have contributed much to the prosperity of the enterprize in Virginia.

We earnestly bespeak an interest in the prayers of God's people in behalf of this work, and we respectfully ask all who may read this report if they will not inquire, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" and as multitudes can never be reached by the Society's General Agents, will not the reader send to me by mail what he may wish to give?

Yours in the labors of the gospel,

J. CROSS, Superintendent of Colportage  
in Virginia and North Carolina.

RICHMOND, March 1, 1855.

#### REPORTS OF GENERAL AGENTS.

Rev. M. T. SUMNER writes, "Another year's labor as General Agent of the American Tract Society for Virginia has been accomplished. I have abundant reason to thank God and take courage. His protection has been enjoyed amid a thousand dangers, and his blessings have been strewed all along my path with a lavish hand. I can appropriately use the language of the pious David, 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.' The friends of Zion have received me with a cordiality that indicates their growing interest in this great catholic institution, and with a liberality that gives earnest of their continued support.

"During the past year, ending March 1, I have collected \$3,427 81, including \$12 75 for the American Messenger, \$38 56 for The Child's Paper, and \$22 25 for Tracts. More than \$600 have been subscribed, which will be available by the first of June next. Other amounts secured through the efforts of your associate in this work have been paid directly into the treasury of the Society, not passing through his hands.

"The publications of the Society are universally received, and we are not without evidence of the great good they are accomplishing. I have several times during the year been cheered in the prosecution of my work while listening to the recitals of those who have dated their conversion to the reading of 'Come to Jesus,' 'Doddridge's Rise and Progress,' 'What is it to believe in Christ,' or a small handbill stamped with 'Eternity.' These are the leaves of the tree of life. May the whole earth be filled with the knowledge of the Lord.



"The monthly periodicals of the Society are great favorites—they should be found in every household. In relation to the Child's Paper, a highly useful minister of the gospel writes me, 'We cannot get on well without it. It gives much interest to our Sunday-schools, and even many of our grown-up people are so much of children as to be very much pleased with it.' Said an old subscriber, when application was made to him to know whether he wished to renew his subscription for the Messenger and Child's Paper, 'Yes, certainly; every body ought to take them.'

"In pursuing my travels, I have been pleased to trace the footsteps of our dear brethren as they have passed from house to house. These colporteurs are living witnesses of the character of our work. They leave their mark on the families they visit. I have been able to get my largest subscriptions upon those fields most cultivated by our colporteurs. These men for the most part are devoted to their work. Said one of them to me last winter, as we were riding along together over the rough roads of the county of H——, while the wind was high and the cold intense, 'My dear brother, I thank God that I am a colporteur. It does me so much good to visit these humble homes and speak to their neglected inmates of Jesus Christ, and leave them some good books that will talk when I am gone.'

"I have visited some five or six conventions of ecclesiastical bodies and two colporteur conventions, one in Wilmington, North Carolina, and the other in Charleston, South Carolina. These conventions resulted in great good, and have given an onward impulse to our colportage system. Those present at these gatherings of the colporteurs, agents, and officers, and friends of the enterprise, will not soon forget the delightful interviews then enjoyed. Our hearts were warmed and our zeal quickened for God.

"In closing, I would say that the American Tract Society has secured the confidence of the people of Virginia by its *fidelity* to the *principles* of its constitution. It has commanded their respect from the *unity* of its object and the *harmony* that has prevailed in its councils. It deserves the sympathy and support of all good and pious people, as it is engaged in a work long neglected and urgently demanded—the religious instruction of the poor and ignorant at their own homes. God speed this Society, the object of which is to diffuse a knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ as the Redeemer of sinners, and to promote the interests of vital godliness and sound morality by the circulation of religious tracts calculated to receive the approbation of all evangelical Christians."

Rev. S. R. SLACK reports, "During the year ending March 1, I have presented the claims of the Tract Society before congregations in the counties of Albemarle, Orange, Madison, Fauquier, Loudoun, Clarke, Jefferson, Berkeley, Frederick, Nelson, Amherst, Botetourt, Roanoke, Cumberland, Halifax, Pittsylvania, Nansemond, and Northampton; and in the towns of Portsmouth, Charlottesville, Winchester, Norfolk, Petersburg, Williamsburg, and Richmond, at the University of Virginia, and the college of William and Mary in Virginia; and also in the cities of Washington and Georgetown, District of Columbia, and Charleston, South Carolina, in all which places considerable interest has been manifested in the cause of colportage and the dissemination of a religious literature; and liberal contributions have been made in furtherance of these objects. My collections have amounted to \$3,308 94. The people see the necessity of a work like ours, and its adaptation to the increasing wants of our country, and they have *expressed* their estimate of this work, so far as the expression has been made through me, in the above-named number of dollars and cents. May the Lord reward all those who thus express their good-will, and give them his blessing both now and evermore."

## EXTRACTS FROM REPORTS OF COLPORTEURS IN VIRGINIA.

### REPORT OF MR. A. B.

"During this quarter I labored mostly in the lower part of — county, over an area of twenty square miles. Mr. W——, a pious and benevolent Presbyterian, who resides on the extreme upper side of the region, saw and felt the wants of the people and sought for a colporteur. O, if we had such men in every district, there would not long remain so much destitution. I visited every family in the district, and supplied them with books and tracts, either by sale or grants. I worked my way, meeting and adapting myself and religious truth to the aged and the young, of varied cases, but all in need of religious influence to counteract evils destructive to the soul.

"I met a man who said, God made some people drunkards and some sober. On asking for some evidences of this opinion, he declined giving any, saying it was his own notion. Another said he didn't believe any body would ever get to heaven, yet he professed a belief in the word of God. Another man offered, as an excuse for not getting books, his having *two* Bibles; and for his dislike to being a Christian, the inconsistency of church-members. I answered his objections; read some in Baxter on Conversion and the Bible. His wife and seven children were all irreligious. I sold him \$3 50 worth of books.

"I offered to sell books to the head of a family who told me there was no religion in his neighborhood. I said, then there is a greater necessity for religious books. He bought a dollar's worth, after much persuasion. He lived within three hundred yards of a church, of which, I was informed, he was a member. Met a



very old man, and inquired about his religious state. He said he had none. 'Why,' said I, 'so long in this world, and not yet ready for the next?' Gave him The Great Question Answered. Saw him soon after, and gave him a book suited to the anxious inquirer, for he had become such.

"Some heads of families put no estimate on religious truth; with such I always succeed when I feel earnestly the interest that our work demands. Some I meet with who have but little knowledge of the Bible, and of themselves. One had not been to church for thirty years. A woman in good circumstances, and who has several sons, when I spoke of the youths' library, said, 'What sort of a book is that?' Some think sinners ought not to pray. One read a tract on swearing, and resolved to quit the practice. Some carry their books with them to their fields, and read as they rest. The Sabbath Manual is highly prized and widely read. I had a fine opportunity to circulate tracts on the railroad. I found no such books as Bunyan, Doddridge, and Baxter in the large number of families visited, and rarely a family altar; great negligence in parental instruction, and no Sabbath-schools. I endeavored to put a copy of 'Come to Jesus' in every family. I visited scarcely a family that was well supplied with books. The greatest number had but few, and some had none at all. I met with kindness and respect. Generally, the people need our labor and the distribution of religious information. May all ultimate in their salvation and the glory of God."

#### REPORT OF REV. A. W.

"Since my last quarterly report, a considerable portion of my time has been spent in ministerial labors, especially where continuous meetings have been held. This accounts for my light sales; but, from the scarcity of ministers and the special indications of the divine blessing on our efforts, it seemed necessary to deviate from the rule regulating the specific duties of colporteurs. Very many persons have been brought to a knowledge of the truth at the different meetings I have attended. One of them says the Anxious Inquirer was the *great work* with him, as it was the means of leading him to trust in Christ for salvation."

"Some portions of my field are very destitute. One man said, in reply to my question, 'Don't you want some good books?' 'No; I have no use for books, but I would like to get a jug of liquor.' One day I suppose I passed twenty houses and hovels without being able, by all the arguments I could produce, to sell a single book. In this portion of country, the colporteur meets with many trials of faith and patience. He has great need to 'take unto him the whole armor of God.' But while his labors in travelling through this rugged wilderness country are very arduous, and while he has prejudice and arrogance on the one hand, and on the other ignorance and poverty to contend with, yet he has reason to thank God that he is permitted to spread abroad the sacred pages of truth which must result in good to his fellow-men, and to the glory of God. That such may be the result of all our labors is my prayer."

#### REPORT OF MR. W. C. T.

"Those only who have realized it, know how great is the sacrifice one makes in leaving the dear home circle to engage in a self-denying mission like this. Yet among its bitter, I find a sweet, for it is truly delightful to trace the footsteps of such a colporteur as the one who preceded me in this region. He has left an influence here that will tell on generations yet to come. But as you want facts and not opinions merely, I have prevailed on a gentleman to write a sketch of the impressions made on his mind by this colporteur, which I give you. In addition

to what this man has written I will add, that he was very wicked and dissipated. but he is now one of the most devoutly pious men I meet with, and is sincerely anxious to train up his children for God. He loves the Tract Society, and all in any way connected with it, because it was the instrument of his conversion.

"The Lord has been reviving his work here. Souls have been converted to God, and others, with melted hearts, are inquiring, Lord, what wouldst thou have us to do? I have organized one Sabbath-school, which promises well, to judge from the lively interest shown by those concerned in it. They promise to keep it up during the entire winter, which is rare in this country, where Sunday-schools are closed in winter."

NARRATIVE BY MR. S. C.—"June 6. This is a day long to be remembered, for it is the anniversary of my first solemn impressions of the value of my soul, occasioned by the faithful admonitions of Mr. P——, a colporteur of the American Tract Society. On entering my house at noon, four years ago this day, my little daughter met and told me there was a man within who had books to sell. I replied, rudely, that I reckoned he was a yankee. My mind changed on meeting his mild look, and listening to his pleasant conversation. Both told me he was a man of God sent to do me good. He soon recommended some of his books, and I bought *Saints' Rest*, *Baxter's Call*, *Doddridge's Rise and Progress*, and *Edwards' History of Redemption*. When we sat down to dinner, the colporteur implored God's blessing on the bounties before us. This pleased me much, for I had neglected this duty all my life.

"After dinner he and I retired to another room. Seeing his boldness in speaking on religious subjects, I feared he would put hard questions to me, and so I told him I was no professor of religion. He then asked permission to pray with my family. This was a great cross to me, for we were all strangers to prayer. However, I told him he might pray. On seeing my family all collected together to be prayed with for the first time in their lives, I felt ashamed, for I knew it was a duty that ought to have been performed long ago. He read *Isaiah 51st* and explained it, and then we knelt to pray. The sweet words he used in prayer for me and my family, affected me still more. After prayer he asked my wife if she had made her peace with God; and on receiving a negative reply, he admonished her and all of the danger of delay, and begged us to seek God at once, and then bade us farewell most kindly. I was almost persuaded to be a Christian just then. Two days afterwards it pleased the Lord to afflict us heavily; a dear little daughter took suddenly ill, and died before sunset the same day. This brought back to memory Mr. P——'s conversation and prayer, and led me to reflect on my past life; how wicked I had been, and I resolved not to rest until my sins were forgiven. I told my wife about my resolution, and she joined in it. Hearing of the death of our child, Mr. P—— came to sympathize with us. I told him how much I desired to seek the Lord, and opened my heart to him for instruction. He was greatly delighted with this, and told me the way I should pursue, pointing to the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world. And now I sought earnestly the new life, reading my new books, and praying for divine direction and assistance. This continued for eight or ten days, during which I read much in *Baxter's Call*, which was accompanied by the Spirit of God. One night, as I prayed, I was led to believe that God, for Christ's sake, heard my petitions and forgave my sins, which made me rejoice in his great name. My friend rejoiced with me. Since that time I have passed through great difficulty and distress of mind; but God being my helper, I was strengthened to bear up under them, and I thank God that my face is still set Zionward, and by his grace I am more than ever determined to make heaven my home at the end of this life."

"The people in this county must have books; so, as there are no bookstores, they supply themselves with novels and school-books as they can; but they buy your volumes eagerly, and appreciate them highly. I have yet to hear of the first one who was dissatisfied with his purchases. One who bought \$9 worth of books, told me he would not take \$20 for them. Some had long wanted such and such books, but did not know where to get them; while others date their conviction of sin, and instruction in the way of life, from the perusal of these volumes. While there is much good evangelical preaching in this county, facts compel me to say that there is also some of a directly opposite character: for example, one preacher reproved his people sharply for letting *people of other denominations than their own come into their houses*. He told them they could not be saved unless they kept the commandments, *and one of the commandments* was, 'If any come unto you, and have not *this doctrine*, receive him not into your houses.' He accused his people of being worse than men of the world, 'for,' said he, 'you not only receive such into your houses, but you *even let them pray* with you, which some of the men of the world have assured me *they* would not permit.'

"To show the effect of such preaching as this, suffer me to state an anecdote. I asked an old lady if we should pray before parting. 'Oh, no; we don't have any praying in *our houses*.' 'I thought you said you were a church-member?' 'Oh, yes; I am a member of the ——— now. I did not change as some of these young people here did, who joined the ———, and some the United ———.' 'Are you a member of *any church*, and yet live without prayer?' 'Oh, yes; I try to pray *in church*; but then we never pray at our *houses*. Some pray at their *tables*, but *we* never have any praying at *our tables*. These United ——— have been praying for three weeks, 'alluding to a prayer-meeting, 'but there is no use in my praying; I pay my preacher for doing *that*.'

"Even when wholesome doctrine is preached, the astonishing ignorance of the hearers which we often meet with, shows the necessity of colportage. For example, I visited a lady thirty years of age, who could not tell me who died for sinners; and even her *mother* was unable to answer the question; but when I asked if she had not heard the minister say, 'God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life?' she said, 'Oh, yes; I *have* heard the preacher say that;' showing that though she remembered the language, she knew nothing of its meaning. I looked up every dwelling, rich and poor, and when I found the inmates absent, slipped the tract, Prepare to meet thy God, or some other suitable one, under the door.

"The people along the mountains are very destitute, not only of religious books, but of the comforts of life. I rode from morning till night during four of the coldest days this season, and sold only 85 cents' worth of books. In certain portions of the county the people did not treat me kindly, while in other places I met with the most cordial Christian sympathy and kindness. In that part of the county explored by brother P——, I found about one family in fifty destitute of religious books, and in the part he did not visit, about one in every four or five.

"The temperance reformation is creating a good deal of excitement here at present. The magistrates have refused to grant license to liquor-sellers. I gave the Temperance Manual to a man who not only drank, but encouraged his children to drink. He promised to quit the practice. A farmer told me he had a drinking man in his employment, for whose reformation he was willing to give almost any thing. I gave that man a tract, which was effectual in breaking him of the habit.



## REPORT OF REV. L. H.

"I am happy to say that there is certainly an improvement in the moral condition of my field. Last year seven Sabbath-schools were kept up in C—— county, where there had been only two or three at any previous time. The Lord has blessed my labors to the conversion, I trust, of fifteen souls. I preached eighty-eight sermons in connection with my colporteur labors. Some change has taken place also in the anti-reading portions of my field. In a neighborhood of Antimission Baptists I preached on Saturday and Sabbath, and by Wednesday night succeeded in selling eight dollars' worth of books, and apparently a considerable religious interest was awakened. A leader in drinking parties bought Putnam and the Wolf. He has quit drinking, and says the '*book saved him.*' Hearing that a young lady, sinking in consumption, resisted every effort of her pious friends to turn her thoughts to her spiritual state, I sent her a Bible with a written request to read it, as it was sent for her own good. She read my note, and turning to the Bible, it pleased God to bless her reading. She lived just two weeks longer, and died praising Him who had called her, first to suffer and then to rejoice for ever. Many others thank God for books, and say they are great blessings to the community; but, alas, there is yet great destitution."

## REPORT OF MR. J. A. W.

"I have spent four months and twelve days in your service, and have gone once entirely over King William county. Visited 410 families, sold books to the amount of \$349 66, and granted to the value of \$40 61. Found thirteen families destitute of the Bible, and supplied eight, and intend to take the other Bibles on my next course of visitation. Four of these families could not read. Although the people in this county are very generally well supplied with books, I have sold many. My sales were not confined to private houses. I sold by the way-side and away in the woods, wherever I could find a human being at work that would buy. I met a man one day who said, 'You will *starve* selling books.' But not as long as the Tract Society sends me good books and tracts to sell and give the people; while this lasts, there is no danger of starving, I replied. I have been very kindly received, and some tell me I am doing a great work, and wish me God speed. It seems that I cannot get to the people's houses fast enough. Some, when we meet, tell me they have been looking for me to come with my books and tracts, and if I happen to pass without calling, they fancy themselves slighted. I visited a family, and as I was leaving the old lady grasped my hand, and with brimming eyes said, 'I know the Lord sent you here.' Scenes like that comfort me."

"I visited the Indians in this county living on the Pamunky river. They have about 1,200 acres of land, 600 of which is in cultivation. There are fifteen families living on this land. It is divided into fifteen parts, to suit themselves. Some of them are in good circumstances; some very dissipated and idle. They might all make respectable livings on this land, if they would work. They spend a good deal of time in fishing. A large number of them can read, and twenty-five of them belong to the church. They told me they were glad I had thought enough of them to visit them. They would like to have a church, but lack means to build one. They have \$25, that they are keeping for this purpose, but it will take \$150 to put up a suitable house. They hold their prayer-meeting in private rooms. Last year their crops were destroyed by hail-storms. I also visited the reputed Indians on Matapond river. They are a reckless people. Only one family can claim an Indian origin, and it is a very respectable family. The wife and daugh

ter can read and write, and both belong to the church. The husband is not an Indian. The wife brought out her family Bible, which she said had been her grandmother's. It appeared to me to have been used a hundred years. I read a chapter and prayed with them. There are eight or ten little huts, besides this house in the settlement, all in a ruinous condition. These people claim fifty-five acres of land.

"There are twelve churches in this county, and seven Sabbath-schools, containing from three to four hundred pupils. The Lord was with his people last year, and many souls were brought to the fold of Christ. I have visited about one fourth of King and Queen county, and hope to get over all of it by the first of July."

#### REPORT OF MR. C. R. R.

"At the close of another year in the Society's service, I am reminded that you will be expecting some account of what I have seen and done, and what God has done through my instrumentality.

"In making 1,122 visits, and in passing about my field of labor, I have seen much need of colportage and other active Christian effort, and have endeavored to get as many persons as possible engaged in Sabbath-schools and other ways of doing good.

"In circulating by sale and gift about four thousand volumes, I have seen many places where they were greatly needed. Some families had very few books of any kind; many, but a limited supply when compared with their abundance in other things; and other families needed them to take the place of trashy publications. I have seen many children growing up with but little knowledge of God and his word and ways, and have been glad of the opportunity of getting them interested in Sunday-schools, and the Bible, and good books. In a school I recently established in the edge of Green county, a young woman about sixteen years of age was asked what the *temple* was, of which she had just been reading in the second of John; as she gave no answer, the teacher repeated the question, adding, 'Was it a place to worship God, or a *market*?' she replied, 'A *market*.'

"I have seen, as I fear every colporteur does, much of the sad effects of intemperance, and have circulated many of the Society's publications on that subject. I have seen the Sabbath desecrated by visiting, travelling, open stores, etc.; and have given circulation to the Sabbath Manual and other publications intended to promote the better observance of the sacred day. At special successive meetings I have seen many persons led to embrace the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour, and have esteemed it a great privilege to be in any way a helper on such occasions. The Rev. B. E. Gibson, who conducted the meeting, has recently gone to his eternal reward. He was an able minister and one of the most excellent of the earth. A few years since he was chaplain at the University of Virginia, where he was esteemed and loved by all who knew him. I was with him several days just before his last illness, when he expressed his estimation of my work, and regretted he had not a hundred dollars to purchase books and tracts for distribution. Next day he bought as many as his means would allow, to which I added some as a grant. I remember how pleased he was when some friends presented him the Pastor's Library, and some time after he desired me to get it presented to his colleague, and also to other ministers. I mention these things in connection with this departed friend, feeling assured that his name and expressions will be remembered in this community as long as any that can be mentioned.

"The Rev. W. M. N——, in introducing me to his congregation, spoke of the Tract Society as the *Peace Society*, having nothing to do with denominational mat-



ters. He also accompanied me to the houses of some of his people. An afflicted aged lady desired him to select five dollars' worth of books for her, which he did; and on visiting her a few days afterwards, she was so pleased with his selection that she exclaimed, 'Oh, sir, you have made me rich.'

"I am pleased from time to time to hear that the publications not only give great satisfaction, but are useful in a variety of ways. I gave 'Baxter's Call' to a thoughtless young man some years ago. He was not accustomed to read serious books, but his pious mother informed me that on a Sunday, when he was kept at home by bad weather, he spent part of the day reading the 'Call.' She could not say it had proved the means of his conversion, but as he rose from perusing the book, he went to his room and destroyed his pack of cards. He has recently purchased quite a number of books.

"I gave the tract 'Little James,' to a small boy of that name. His mother read it to him, while he listened very attentively. As she ended the reading, he burst into tears and said he wished *he* could be as good as little James. I supplied the S—— Sabbath-school with the Youth's Library. A boy about ten years of age became greatly interested in the books, and as he read and wept he said he believed some one had just written them to make people get religion. A lady said the 'Tract Primer' had been a treasure to little George. It has kept him contented from play on the Sabbath; we have read to him and he has learnt to read himself, and has also committed much of it to memory; and when he hears the Bible read, or listens to preaching, he remembers any passage he has seen in his Primer, and is sure to express pleasure either by word or look. I am happy to discover a growing interest in good reading, and particularly in the Society's publications. Mr. R—— remarked that he believed the interest would increase, and people would desire more and more of such reading. He spoke of himself, how he had lost his love for light reading, and felt that he had no time for it, now that so many good books were brought to his notice. May God's blessing be given so abundantly that every page will prove a means of doing good."

#### REPORT OF MR. J. A. D.

"I have labored nine months for the Society, and have had much pleasure in the work, much spiritual comfort, and much satisfaction from the indications I have had that your publications have been of great benefit, strengthening the believer, comforting the penitent, and awakening the sinner. I assisted to organize one Sabbath-school which numbers eighty scholars. Considerable interest is felt for this school in its own neighborhood, and I think it will be a blessing to the entire community. The books were furnished by a Sabbath-school agent. I have just returned from a part of this county never before visited by a colporteur of the American Tract Society. Found much destitution, a great number with few or no religious books. Being compelled to leave that neighborhood, after visiting but few families, I left some books with a friend, and on my return found one man who had been led to reform his life and seek an interest in Christ from reading 'Alleine's Alarm,' and another from the perusal of 'Caroline Smelt.'"

#### REPORT OF REV. W. B. B.

"The part of P—— county which is known by the name of the North Fork of the Potomac, is a very rough part of the world. The people, however, are very kind, and every face seems to brighten up at the sight of a colporteur and his books, which they generally call 'splendid.' I found many who could not read a

word. They would ask me to read a little for them, which I did, and it seemed to delight them very much. Found one man deeply concerned about his soul. I stayed over night to converse, instruct, and pray with him. I left him in a state of great spiritual enjoyment. I went down the South Fork as far as the county-seat, spent one night, and delivered a lecture in the free meeting-house to a large congregation. I found many warm friends of the tract cause. I found it necessary to spend the night at an inn, but on calling for my bill next morning the landlord told me my bill had been discharged by a gentleman."

#### REPORT OF REV. E. C.

"One day I visited 17 families; eight of them had no Bibles; 24 grown persons among them could not read. One girl of 12 had never heard a sermon. Asking her if there was a Bible in the house, she said, 'Yes,' and brought me an almanac. She called it a *new Bible*, and said her father bought it last year. I prayed with that family, to their utter astonishment. It was the first time a prayer had been offered in that house. I asked, at another house, 'Have you a Bible?' 'No, and we don't want one.' 'Have you any good books?' 'No.' I opened my package of books, and then I was ordered out of the house; but I said I was not in a hurry to go—I wanted to sell some books. They said the priest would not permit them to read such books; but finally I persuaded them to buy Baxter's Call, a tract volume, a pamphlet, Bible Stories, etc. Since that time both man and wife have joined the Protestant Methodist church. One man refused to comply with his wife's entreaties for a Testament, 'because she would always be reading it when she ought to be at work.' A man who had spent his last copper for rum, wanted Baxter's Call for his wife. He offered his bottle of rum for one. I told him to take the book and keep it and read it, which he promised to do. I took the bottle of rum, and broke it in the street of W—. I am told this man has quit drinking.

"I have been visiting much among very poor people, riding through cold and wet, with much fatigue and anxiety of mind, doing all I could in the ministry besides, and often coming home to find my family sick. I have attended five protracted meetings, and have had evidence of 82 hopeful conversions. There is a great demand for books, and many people are glad to see me. They say, 'The preacher has *all kinds of books*; yes, the very books we want.' I have organized one Sabbath-school, and two more will be organized as soon as I can get books. I visit every house as I go, and have selected but a few incidents out of many which are interesting."

#### REPORT OF MR. A. W. B.

"My time was mostly spent on the most destitute portions of my field, where my work has been profitably done and highly appreciated. I visited many poor people and supplied them with books, as my grants show. I gave Baxter's Saints' Rest to the mistress of a family, who said she did not believe in the Bible. I visit all the day schools on my field for tract distribution, conversation, and prayer. The little people are always anxious to see me, and have much to tell their parents about the colporteur. One day I visited 11 families, sold \$1 07 worth of books, and granted \$3 35. Such is the proportion my grants bear to my sales in a whole neighborhood sometimes. These facts I mean to publish over the whole country wherever I go.

"Sometimes I am quite exhausted by labor, but I cannot be idle when so much must be done."

## REPORT OF REV. W. G. M.

"After more than seven years spent in your service, I now look over the large field I have occupied and rejoice in the great improvement that has taken place in that time. Many places seven years ago destitute of God's word, preaching, Sabbath-schools, are now supplied with all these. There has been a large increase in the number of Sabbath-schools since last year. The cause of our Lord has prospered through your instrumentality. Like the good leaven, these means are acting on the whole population of our hill country. To the patrons of the Society I must say, great will be your reward in heaven, for many shall rise up and call you blessed, for having taught them the way of eternal life."

## REPORT OF MR. W. H. M.

"My grants during the year were large, in consequence of the large number of poor families on my field. Indeed, it appears to me, that had the patrons of the Tract Society been with me and witnessed the wretched condition of some of these families, the poverty and ignorance and dissipated habits of the people, they would indeed feel that they are aiding a good cause by sending out books and laborers to instruct and benefit the dwellers on these mountains and vallies. I visited one house that had windows without glass. Two stools made up the furniture, and there were four little half-clothed children. There was no book in the house. I gave them a Testament and some little books, and my heart filled up when I saw how gratefully they were received; and I felt it was a privilege to be an humble bearer of the word of God to these poor people, and to talk to them about the Saviour. The Lord is with us; I have visited numbers who seem truly penitent. One lady has professed conversion."

## REPORT OF MR. J. C. C.

"The last quarter was spent in my native county, where I sold upwards of \$400 in books and tracts, although it is considered a dissipated county, considering the religious advantages enjoyed by the people. I found books enough, such as they were; but some had no religious books, and these people were exceedingly pleased with such as were given them. One poor widow with several small children, after thanking me repeatedly for the books and tracts, saying they would be so acceptable to read on the Sabbath, raised the window, after I had left the house, to say she was very much obliged. It is truly gratifying to be the bearer of good books and tracts to the destitute, believing they will be read with interest and be productive of good. In N—— county I found much destitution, but the people were quite ready to buy books whenever they had money, while the indigent received them gladly when they were granted."

## REPORT OF REV. R. W. B.

"A brother who had bought books of me several times, told me not long since, that of all the books he had purchased of me, not one was left. He had read them and then sold or loaned or given them among his neighbors. I let him have a quantity at half price, which he has disposed of in the same way, and thus much good is done. I was called on to preach the funeral sermon of a young man who was converted through the agency of the tracts, 'Tis All for the Best, and The Widow's Son."

"About two hundred conversions have taken place on this field during the year. Five or six churches were built, and many other signs of improvement are visible."



## REPORT OF MR. D. B. E.

"I have witnessed some good resulting from my tract distributions and visits. Two young ladies were awakened by a tract; one of them has made a profession of religion. A handbill, given out at a religious meeting, was the means of awakening a young man. I prevailed on a Roman-catholic lady to read The Dairyman's Daughter. She was well pleased with it."

## REPORT OF MR. J. S.

"There is a part of this county which, for years, has withstood every effort made to enlighten it. Not a book could be sold nor a meeting held, so high did popular prejudice run against every thing good. Not very long ago, a young man of some education succeeded in getting up a day-school in this hard, intemperate neighborhood. Pretty soon he proposed forming a Debating Society. The plan succeeded, and among the questions was this, Which is worse, war or intemperance? The teacher was selected to discuss the evils of intemperance. But here a difficulty arose: he had never made a speech in his life, nor read any thing on the subject; but the thought occurred that Mr. —, an intelligent gentleman in an adjoining neighborhood, could throw some light into his mind. So he went to Mr. — and honestly stated the case. The gentleman told him that he had the Temperance Manual and Beecher's Six Sermons, both of which he could have. He got the books and went to reading, and then to memorizing Beecher, until he had a fine speech ready. At the appointed time, a great number turned out to hear the discussion. The young man was eloquent on the subject he had to treat. The people were astonished, and all cried out, 'Where did you get that?' The young orator laid down his laurels at Beecher's feet, and in a short time I sold not only all the Beechers I had, but all my temperance documents, and quite a reformation has taken place. One man who would not buy or even accept of a book for his family, and was once highly incensed by my leaving a tract for him to read, has become a warm friend to me and my work."

## REPORT OF REV. W. T.

"If I understand the object of the Committee and patrons of the American Tract Society in requiring quarterly and annual reports of their colporteurs, it is to ascertain the exact moral condition of the people. Were I to portray it, the half would not be believed by some who, could they accompany me in my visits, see what I see, and hear what I hear, would be ready to say, like the queen of Sheba, 'The half has not been told.' But I will endeavor to give a general view of my field. C—— county is, in some parts, supplied with the ministry and good books, but by far the largest portion of it is destitute of both. Whole neighborhoods know nothing about religious privileges, and many people do not hear a sermon for years. Some of them tell me they would gladly attend church if they could. And I have preached in these destitute places to as attentive, respectful listeners as could be found in the city, but they are not rich enough to support a minister, while I am sure they would willingly help to do so. In one place five or six miles square, there is not a single professor of religion; and I have been told there are children there from 10 to 15 years of age, who never heard a sermon until I visited the place. But one sermon had been preached in six years, and that was a funeral discourse. I cannot but hope that my labors among these people will be productive of good."

"Another part of my field is M—— county. As this is a newly settled county, the people are generally poor, and having no clear lands and build houses, they

have no money to spare yet for books, or even to support the ministry. Here and there they have preaching occasionally, but for the present they must remain without much reading, unless it is granted to them by some benevolent society. Some few places are well supplied with religious books and ministers and churches; it has perhaps two or three Sabbath-schools. Many families live on the mountains where they can hardly be reached, for there are no roads to their little cabins. Their poverty is extreme; they do not have even the necessary comforts of life. Now, how can I say to these poor people, 'Will you buy a book?' when I see they can hardly live? They must receive charity from the charitable. My next field of labor was A—— county. Here the people have been carefully supplied with your books, except on the rugged mountain farms, which are nearly inaccessible. In these spots, the Sabbath is fearfully violated. There is a great want of preachers at present in some parts of this county, which formerly were better supplied. I do not think there are over three or four Sabbath-schools in the county, and two of these are at the court-house. The people want good books, but money is scarce. My sales during the year amounted to \$291 70. Grants, \$76 41."

#### REPORT OF REV. T. R. D.

"During the year I preached forty-four sermons on my field of labor, and thirty-two elsewhere, and nearly one hundred persons were hopefully converted, almost all of whom have united with evangelical churches. We are well supplied with churches, and *all* our ministers unite heartily in the cause. But notwithstanding churches and ministers, pastoral visitation has been too much neglected. On visiting the indigent and afflicted and destitute, I have been told I was the first preacher who had ever called on them. With such, some of your good books were left to aid and comfort them in their affliction and poverty.

"A number of persons have told me they had read more religious books since I came among them than they had done for years, and several have been awakened and converted through their instrumentality. I have found your books wonderfully suited to every condition, and adapted to lead the sinner to Christ. Said a lady, 'Your little book, 'Come to Jesus,' is worth its weight in gold.' Well might she say so, for it had been the chief means of leading her to God. A sceptical gentleman, after reading the Evidences of Christianity, said, 'I can doubt no more, and shall henceforth take the Bible as the word of God.'

"The books are doing good wherever they are circulated. Sabbath-schools have been too much neglected, but I hope to organize several as soon as the spring opens. The temperance cause advances slowly, but steadily. I have given tracts and books on this subject to not a few, and with good results. I found many habitual drinkers among church-members, and with such I used every effort, and some have changed their views and habits. I rejoice in the fact that there are but few destitute of the Bible on my field, yet every day adds new evidence of the necessity of an active agency in this part of the state."

#### REPORT OF MR. R. J. P.

"Were I to draw off a full detail of the ignorance on religious subjects that prevails on this field, it would scarce be credited. The destitution of good books, the little regard paid to the Sabbath, to preaching, to Sabbath and day-schools on one part of my field, would astonish any one; 78 families were destitute of the Bible. My travels were very laborious, riding and walking over mountains, sometimes in deep ravines, again on narrow mountain-ridges. I spent three days on the mountains, during which I did not see a wagon-road or a place where one could



be made. No colporteur had ever been there. The people did not know the meaning of the word, though many of them seemed intelligent. Many of their children never heard a sermon, nor entered a Sabbath-school. My time was almost exclusively spent among the mountains, where the greatest destitution prevails.

"I will record, in a plain way, some of the incidents met with during the year, and should other eyes than those hitherto turned on colporteur reports rest on this, may they be the means of opening the heart of the new reader to aid in sending out the light of truth to these dark places, where are found people of various nations and languages at the Iron works, where no Sabbath is known, nor Sabbath-schools, nor preaching. I went, by request of the proprietor of a furnace, among his operatives, and distributed tracts and books. Many of them had no Bibles, nor books of any kind. He kept a list of names of the destitute, and intends to furnish them with books at his own expense.

"I travelled also among the anti-mission people. Many of them would not buy, nor let their children buy books. I gave a catalogue to each family, and one of their preachers asked for the *History of the Book-man*, as they of the mountains call us, and I gave him one, and a copy of 'Home Evangelization.' He since told me the books pleased him much. Gave some tracts to an aged crippled lady, and to her daughter, just converted, I gave Pike's Guide. The old lady shed tears of gratitude for the gift. I was the first colporteur that had visited her, and no minister had ever been in her house but one, who had performed the marriage ceremony of her daughter. One old anti-missionary had three married children on his farm, all with families, but not one Bible among them.

"An old blind woman asked me to read for her. She said the Saints' Everlasting Rest had been the means of her seeking religion in her youth. A pious young lady attributes her awakening to Flavel's Christ Knocking at the Door, which she bought of me. A minister, in one of his late sermons, attributed his conversion to Mason on Self-Knowledge, and said every man ought to have one. Another said my books and tracts were doing great good; that families now sought religious instruction in books, particularly the younger members, and that his churches increased largely last year. Another minister said he believed the Tract effort had awakened a warm missionary feeling among his people."

#### REPORT OF REV. W. E. L.

"I have met with much kindness in H—— county. I met with a man who was strongly inclined to Romanism, and opposed to evangelical religion. Conversed seriously with him, and finally persuaded him to buy some of my books. I see him frequently. His views have so changed that he aids me in my work very much. I gave the Pictorial Narratives to an old lady, which fell into the hands of a young woman, who on reading it was so much impressed with the truth that she has, from being very thoughtless, become quite serious. I sold the Sabbath Manual to a man who was in the habit of hunting on the Sabbath. He could not read, but his family read it to him. I instructed him as well as I could. He appears to be a changed man."

#### REPORT OF MR. S. R.

"I spent four months in B—— and G—— counties, where I found much destitution. I believe the blessing of the Lord follows my labors. I heard of a number of men, to whom I distributed books and tracts last year, who have since professed religion and bid fair to become pillars in the church of God. Met a drunken

man one day in the street of A——, and admonished him of the awful consequences of his vice. Sold him some books, and exhorted him to leave off sinning and turn to God. Some time ago I was at the same place, at a religious meeting; this man came up, and grasping my hand, asked if I recollected him. He told me who he was, and added, 'Oh, that reproof followed me night and day; I had no rest till I found it in believing.' He is now in the church, and promises to be highly useful. The destitution in R—— county is not very great, except along the railroad lines, where the workmen and their families are grossly ignorant and superstitious. They are all under priestly influence, and reject every offer made to instruct them or improve their social condition. I made a great effort in distributing books and tracts in the town of H——, where a great reformation is taking place. Have been laboring in a revival of religion for two weeks. Sixty have been hopefully converted, all of whom have united with their favorite evangelical churches."

#### REPORT OF MR. E. C.

"Not having been long in this work, I cannot report many striking facts. I gave a tract to a man who, after looking at it, threw it into the fire, saying, he 'read no such stuff' as that. I said, 'Perhaps the reading of that tract might have been the means of saving your soul,' and left him in the hands of God. He had habitually neglected the means of grace up to that time, but since then he has attended church regularly, does not use profane language, and I am informed by his friends that a great change is apparent in his life. He acknowledged his error to me, said he had not believed in Christ, but that he now knows he was wrong. He has requested me to give him tracts, which he carefully reads. He was a strong Universalist, but I trust his faith is undergoing a radical change.

"I met another Universalist, who had not only avoided divine worship for eleven years, but refused permission to his children to attend, and handed him tracts which he refused to take. After repeated visits, I prevailed on him to read a small tract suited to his case. On my next visit he confessed he would like the tract, *if it were true*. I gave him other tracts, and visit him often. Last week he went to church; yesterday he said his children might attend Sunday-school.

"I found a poor family entirely destitute of books. They were utterly ignorant of every thing pertaining to salvation. I read a portion of Scripture, conversed, and then prayed with them, and have frequently visited them since for the same purpose. The poor mother seems to have trembling faith and hope in Christ, which I trust may strengthen and grow brighter and brighter until she shall be called to a home in heaven. I often meet with similar cases. A lady informed me that a tract given to her in her childhood was, under God, the means of her conversion. I succeeded in persuading two Roman-catholic families to receive and read tracts. I frequently send children who do not attend Sabbath-school to the various schools of our city, and report to the ministers of the different denominations every destitute unknown member of such churches, or any who, having but recently come to the city, are still unconnected with the churches to which they ought to belong.

"My field, embracing both N—— and P——, is large, and one heretofore greatly neglected. While I must confess that I meet with some discouragements, yet in the prosecution of my labors there are not a few things highly encouraging, and I can truly say that I feel an increasing interest in my work. The people of all denominations, except a few Roman-catholics, have received me with the utmost kindness and respect, and I have been somewhat cheered in my work by

seeing, as I trust, that my labors are not wholly in vain. Some families, for years neglectful of public worship, have been induced to attend church.

"I find seamen anxious to possess tracts. Often as I approach a vessel I hear a demand for tracts from those who fear I will overlook them in the distribution."

#### REPORT OF REV. H. J. H.

"Although my sales have been much larger than at first anticipated, I trust much good has been effected by other means. I found some least expected, ready to hear, cheerfully to receive instructions and books, and even to buy them. These cases were the more encouraging as they were wholly unlooked for. Called on one Catholic family, who bought largely and seemed highly pleased with the books, and gratified by the visit. Found eight others, six of whom had no Bible. Three only would receive the precious volumes, their church not permitting them. On the second Sabbath preached and administered the Lord's supper to the colored people. An interesting day. This people seem more ready to receive instruction than the whites. With warm hearts they welcome me and attentively listen to the word of life. Seven or eight years ago I supplied an old lady with a Bible. I recently called to see her and with marked pleasure she produced the much-used treasure, saying, 'Here is the book you loaned me so many years ago. Nothing could induce me to part with it.' I gave her 'Isabella Graham,' and her unaffected gratitude would have touched even a cold heart. I have taken special pains to carry out my 'instructions' to visit the poor, the sick, and the afflicted, not because I was required to do so, for I long since learnt by experience that it is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting."

#### REPORT OF MR. J. W. M.

"I visited a poor widow with four daughters, one of whom never went to church. I conversed and prayed with her. On the next Sabbath she attended church. She told her mother she never would miss another Sabbath-meeting, if she could help it. Found another widow with four little children, and no Bible or any religious book.

"Called on a man of wealth who yet possessed not the 'true riches.' As I prayed and talked to him he wept like a child. Said he, 'Mr. M——, you are the first person that ever came to my house to pray with me.'"

#### REPORT OF REV. H. T.

"The people are generally very kind, though irreligious. The children, though very ignorant, are anxious to buy my pretty books, and often burst into tears when their parents refuse to purchase books for them. The intelligent men of this community do not hesitate to say that the Tract Society is doing inestimable good. There is great destitution on this field. I have seen but three churches in all my travels. I sometimes fear I am too liberal in granting what is not my own. Please instruct me in regard to making grants to the many poor people I meet with."



EXTRACTS FROM REPORTS OF COLPORTEURS  
IN NORTH CAROLINA. .

## REPORT OF MR. J. R. B.

"Seven months have elapsed since I engaged in this work as an humble colporteur, during which I have witnessed many soul-cheering scenes as well as many hard trials, and I now feel that I did the best I could for the Society.

"I found many families not one of whom could read, and many that could read had no books, not even Bibles. Tract Primers and small books were circulated among all on my first visit, and on my second I found that some of the children had committed nearly the whole to memory. One poor widow thanked God that I had been sent that way, for her children were evidently improving much from their new books. We have just closed a series of meetings which resulted in the hopeful conversion of eighteen or twenty persons. I was present at the meetings for five days and nights."

## REPORT OF MR. S. L. R.

"During the month of September I was engaged in a revival of religion, which resulted in the hopeful conversion of twenty souls. I distributed a good many tracts among the people, which I believe resulted in good. Last week I visited a portion of the county containing many Roman-catholic families. I conversed and distributed all the tracts I had, which were kindly accepted, and many requested Bibles. I promised to visit them soon again. Last Sabbath I succeeded in forming a Sabbath-school at a place called H—, in this county. Formerly it was noted for the dissipation of its people, but now there is apparently a disposition to reform. Efforts are making to build a church, which will probably be accomplished this spring. I shall visit the place again in a week or two. One individual who sold ardent spirits has concluded to quit it.

"I visited a family composed of three females. The mother and one daughter were irreligious, and both growing old. I exhorted and prayed with them. Both heard me gladly. They had no Bible, and were unable to purchase. I gave them one and tracts, which were thankfully received. I hope that by divine assistance I shall accomplish much more the present than I did the past year."

## REPORT OF REV. W. J. B.

"There is much destitution of evangelical preaching in some portions of my field, but these will probably be better supplied shortly. Some brethren in my own communion treat me with cold indifference, because I am engaged in the common cause of our common Lord, but I adore his great name that his presence has been with me. May the God of all grace direct and enable us to discharge our several duties for the sake of his dear Son."

## REPORT OF REV. E. G.

"I have served the Society six months and seven days, visited eight hundred families, sold to the value of \$185 80, and granted \$45. Addressed thirty-three meetings; found 167 families destitute of religious books, and sixty-six destitute of the Bible. My field of labor the last quarter presented a sad picture to a Christian, owing to the lack of gospel preaching; for, although every one disposed to do so,

may hear preaching occasionally in nearly every neighborhood, yet, I am deeply grieved to say it does not deserve the name of gospel-preaching. It is *anti-missionary* preaching. Here I had to contend with violent prejudices against our books, especially among the ministers. One of them said our books ought to be burnt. Of course there is a want of education in this district, but there is now a prospect of better days in this respect. Some Sabbath-schools are kept up in the warm season; and our youth are much interested in our books, and beg their parents, even in tears, to buy for them. Elsewhere our books are gladly received by parents and children, particularly among the very poor. I have seen them lay out their last dime for books, even taking the silver bit suspended from their children's necks for this purpose. One woman sent her son to borrow money to buy books for her children, and obtained it; but not yet satisfied, she and her son went with me on my way, and borrowed more money to purchase a book for herself and husband. Intemperance has hitherto been a formidable foe to our work, but even here I am encouraged by the formation of Temperance Societies. I visited a wealthy family, the master of which was a hard drinker. I talked to him on the subject of temperance, and prayed with him. He and his wife have signed the pledge. One of their sons is, I learn, rejoicing in God. Visited a very intemperate neighborhood and left a Manual with a man opposed to temperance; since that time I learn that the whole community has abandoned the use of ardent spirits, using coffee in place of whiskey to refresh them while at work.

"A very respectable dealer and manufacturer of ardent spirits has abandoned the traffic altogether, and I rejoice that one who is so generally regarded with esteem, will hereafter use all his influence on the side of morality.

"Notwithstanding much coldness among Christians here, there have been some conversions during the year, and I have had some highly interesting meetings. There is still great destitution, and people receive our books thankfully and read and weep over them."

#### REPORT OF REV. E. K. B.

"I have spent seven months in your service during the year, sold books to the value of \$168 57, and granted \$22 13. Addressed 63 meetings, and prayed with 101 families. Total number of families visited, leaving out second visits, 683, of whom 83 were destitute of the Bible, and 81 others had no religious books but the Bible. There are churches belonging to five or six denominations of Christians in this county, and the people are well supplied with preaching. Many professors of religion oppose not only the Society's publications, but missions, and the temperance reform. All this is poor encouragement to the colporteur, yet, while witnessing many discouraging scenes, we have some pleasant, refreshing seasons. Sometimes, after toiling without success among people that have good advantages, we become discouraged; and then discover a family for whom none seemed to care, and find them anxious to procure, though unable to purchase books. We are made to rejoice that the Lord put it into the hearts of his people to engage in a plan by which the poor, ignorant, destitute, and hitherto neglected might be supplied with gospel truth in print, and be instructed by his servants in the way of salvation. I visited a cabin among the mountains, where I found only a sickly looking boy about twelve years old. He said his mother and one sister and himself composed the entire family. His father had been a drinking man, and years ago had left them to take care of themselves, since which they had not heard of him. His mother was abroad quilting for a lady in the neighborhood, in order to procure food for herself and children. The little fellow was much pleased with my books; he said they had none but a Testament, which a good man had given to his mother.

He also said they went to church on Sundays, the only time his mother could spare. I instructed the poor boy how to spend this life in order to enjoy the next. He understood me very well, and promised to prepare for death. I gave him a book, and left some tracts for his mother and sister, which he received most gratefully. May God send comfort to all such poor families."

#### REPORT OF MR. T. E. H.

"I have seen many pleasant hours while visiting from house to house, conversing with the people about their souls, and distributing among them the precious truths contained in the tract publications; and I am gratified to learn from some portions of my field, that my labors have been blessed to the awakening and hopeful conversion of some souls. I attended several large meetings during the year, and my soul was often refreshed. Though my sales were not as large as I desired, I am convinced that the books and tracts circulated have accomplished good. I would say in conclusion, that there is great need of colporteur labors, especially in one part of my field, and hope the Lord will make me more efficient in his service."

#### REPORT OF MR. W. T. H. E.

"Your agent has visited 920 families in eight months, conversed on personal religion or prayed with 726 families, embracing 4,356 souls; found 112 families destitute of all religious books but the Bible, and 34 destitute of the Bible; 147 families habitually neglected evangelical preaching. Circulated by sale 1,114 volumes, to the value of \$263 27; and books and tracts as grants to the amount of \$59 16, have been scattered as bread on the waters, to be found after many days.

"The groggery at Brunswick ferry, where I met so much opposition, closed in about a month after my first visit, and is yet closed. If they would all close, this would be a happier county. Old Mr. M—— is a regular attendant at church, which he did not enter for years until he was conversed with on the subject. 'Come to Jesus' brought that lady into the church, and the two little boys I hired to learn are reading now. The man who promised to quit selling liquor has done so, and is now a member of the church. In one destitute neighborhood where there was no day-school a year ago, the children now walk two and three miles to learn to read in the picture-book the book-man gave them. In the village of S—— a Sabbath-school is conducted by a pious lady, who devotes all her energies to the religious instruction of her pupils. As I stood on the piazza, and listened to the fervent prayer of that devoted Christian and teacher, I thought that, were such teachers scattered throughout the land, the wilderness would indeed be made to rejoice, and the desert to blossom as the rose.

"I got one man to buy the 'Tract Primer' for his children, four in number, their ages varying from five to twelve years. Not one of them could tell who made them. Here was a young woman who never heard a sermon or saw a preacher till she was seventeen years of age, and her sister was fourteen when she first heard a sermon. This family are now regular attendants on public worship, and have been carefully instructed in the gospel. The book, 'Universalism not of God,' has done much good among Universalists, and is sought after eagerly.

"Your publications supersede those of a demoralizing character on this field. With but few exceptions, the people do not enjoy the preached word more than once a month; in some neighborhoods but once in three months, and in others once a year. Sunday-schools are rare. This spring, however, I believe increased interest will be felt in this cause, and that many new Sabbath-schools will be



organized. The colporteur enterprise just suits this community. It is the only way by which numbers of families can be reached by the gospel.

"I attended the Colporteur Convention held at Charleston, South Carolina, according to previous instruction. It was the first time I have had the privilege of being present at such a meeting, and I must say that if there be one place on earth more like heaven than another, that is the place where none but Christ and him crucified is known; all being engaged in the one great work of bringing souls to Christ—though of different denominations, yet one in Christ. This Convention represented by eight different sects, united in the same mission of love, working together against error in every form and by every name, presented a picture on which one could gaze with admiration, and exclaim, 'Behold how good and how pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity'—union of soul, union of purpose—the glory of God in the salvation of man. After attending this Convention I feel strengthened in purpose to toil on in this blessed work as long as the providence of God will permit, even until life expires."

#### REPORT OF REV. J. F. M.

"My field for the most part is destitute of all religious books, churches, schools, and the gospel, with here and there a green spot to refresh the hearts of the friends of Zion. I have visited every family in W—— county, and many in H——. Generally I found ready sale for my books as soon as the people became acquainted with the object of the Society and the volumes; and all who can read, read them thoroughly, with few exceptions. The country here is unhealthy. The water is bad, and swarms of mosquitos, gnats, and flies annoy man and beast, night and day, for six or seven months in the year. Though the lands are rich and very productive, and an abundance of grain is raised, and provision of all kinds, yet I find many poor and afflicted persons. The people in many places believe in signs, conjurers, charms, and witchcraft. To some one of these they attribute all their good or bad luck, and in action deny the providence of God, for many people resort to these charmers and conjurers to cure their diseases. I gave one of these charmers the tract, 'It is I,' which he read, and he is now ashamed of his art, and gives God the power and glory of all things. I visited a poor woman whose husband had spent every thing she had, and then tried to starve her to death, and had often beaten her. A few years ago she was worth \$25,000, but now she is left in the care of a poor family. I talked with her about her soul, and read 'It is I,' and prayed; she said she had never prayed, nor had any one ever spoken on religious subjects to her before. I instructed her as faithfully as I could, and left her bent on seeking God.

"I visited many families that spent the Sabbath fishing, etc. Found a sick man who rejoiced to see me. He had read a handbill, 'Caution,' which had brought him to consider. He was very happy. I sold 'Acquaintance with God' to a drinking family. They reformed their lives, and have joined the church. They shed tears of joy every time I meet them, and will ride twenty miles to church on the Sabbath or week-days. Visited a man of some wealth who drank, and was very profane. He would neither let me show my books nor pray. I left 'Come to Jesus' with him. On my next visit I found him dying. He grasped my hand, and looking up motioned for me to pray. His wife bought some tracts, became concerned about her soul, and is now a happy Christian. All this was accomplished solely through the instrumentality of the tract volumes. I visited a poor boy, and sold him a 'Tract Primer.' Encouraged him to learn to read, and obtained the assistance of a lady to teach him. Now he reads well, attends church, and is hopefully converted. About thirty more who did not know a letter, have

learned to read since I sold or gave them the 'Tract Primer.' I visited a rum-shop kept by a young man. While there, he was selling and sending off rum in bottles and jugs. I told him a plan had just occurred to me by which he might be useful, and God would certainly bless him if he were to follow it. He asked how. I pulled out a packet of handbills, and told him to put one on every jug and bottle he sent off, for they might convert some soul, which would be a star in his crown. He looked serious, took the handbills and some tracts, and in a short time closed his shop, and is now a teacher.

"I called on a woman who sold whiskey, and talked to her about her soul. She shed tears freely, and said she had been seeking religion for some time, but to no purpose. I asked if she did not think it was wrong to sell liquor. She finally said it was. I gave her 'Come to Jesus.' She quit selling, and now appears to be a Christian. Gave an Iron-side Baptist, a great anti-missionary man, a tract on missions; he has since changed his views, and goes for missionary efforts and books. I have organized several Sabbath-schools, which are in successful operation; also several day-schools and prayer-meetings. For nearly two months, when every pastor had left, and every one who could leave had gone to healthier regions, God gave me health and strength to visit the sick and the dying. Many a poor dying man and woman, white and colored, with streaming eyes thanked me and the Society, and praised God as I read 'Come to Jesus,' or 'It is I,' or some appropriate tract or chapter. All through this trying time God kept me in good health and happy from day to day. I met with much rough usage from sectarians, but now Christians are more united. Political men opposed to public improvements have for the first time failed. Two years ago a man opposed to the free-school system was elected to office, but last year one who advocates it got the same office by a majority of votes. Over fifty persons professed conversion through reading your volumes, and as many more from our labors. Some Roman-catholics tell me they are more and more convinced of the necessity of trusting alone in Jesus for salvation."

#### REPORT OF MR. J. N. A.

"For a report of the past year, we will go to N—— county and revisit some of the families we saw two years ago. Here is the family of Mr. E. H——, kind and social. Here is the Bible depository. Here also is a store, and in an adjoining room a table with a decanter of native made brandy; beside the decanter is a tumbler, and beside the tumbler a pack of cards. This is a place of trade, of drinking, and of gaming. From here go to Mr. A——; he is at home this evening, and kindly asks us to lodge with him; he is a man of some property and good education, but is not pious, yet he buys a good lot of books. Go from him to J. C——; he is a pious man with a large family; when here before he was not at home; he got fifteen books. Then to old Mr. P——: before, I found him without a Bible, but sold him one, and two or three books. To-day he is glad to see me; sent to the field for his boys, and collected his family for prayer; bought a large lot of books, and is now deeply interested in the improvement of his family. This evening there is a shooting-match, near which I stop an hour, and there I sell twenty books. Then go to Mr. ——'s to lodge. He is a good man, with a nice family. Next morning go over into the turpentine forest; here I go into the cabins, and sitting down on a stool, talk to the wife and children; then going out, give a long *he-oh-ah*, and hear an answer out in the woods. Presently the husband and father comes in, very dirty and ragged, but he has money, and if you talk to him about Christ and pray with him, he buys ten books.

"But as I must go to the Convention at Wilmington, the superintendent

advises me to take a box of books and get there a week before the Convention, to distribute as many as I can. So when I got there, I took my basket full of books and visited 120 families, and distributed books and tracts along the wharves. There several valuable acquaintances were formed, and two or three good prayer-meetings were attended.

"This—Wilmington—has since been my field. Here are examples of devoted piety as well as extreme vice. The families of the city afford good employment when shipping is scarce, and the wharf is an ever-new field of interest and of effort. Here you meet a man of education, who can appreciate a good book. The hardy mariner is here to receive his tract or book, and the hard-working boatman gets a book for his family; while the raftsmen fill the pockets of his great-coat, and starts for his native forest. Seventy-five men are at work in yon shops; you tell them you will be there at dinner-hour to-morrow, and when you go you find twenty or more of them have brought their dinner to the shop, so as to save time to see the books. A Testament with Notes, a Pilgrim's Progress, Baxter's Call, Nelson, Atonement, Young Man, Line upon Line, Nevins, Pictorial Narratives, etc. In these shops I have sold sixty books in one day. The foremen encourage their men to read, and often aid in their selection. From here you can call on a long street of shops, where you will see a rum-shop; you can look in and leave a tract. The next time the keeper invites you in, and you can leave 'Come to Jesus,' or a tract. After a while you may ask him to tack up 'Set down that Glass' on his bar, and then get the Temperance Manual. Thus you come on by degrees, and after a while you have a good stock of temperance reading there.

"This morning visit Mrs. P——. She thinks she does not need any books; her children do not incline to reading, but on Saturday I went again, hoping to see the children. In this way I got *them* to see my books, and was soon able to suit their taste with a quantity of books. It is *the mother* who does not care for books. Here is a family of orphan children. They are poor, but respectable. Here a brother bought Baxter's Call; the sister was anxiously inquiring. She read 'Come to Jesus,' and her darkness was dispelled and she trusts in Christ. Polly J—— is a free colored woman and decidedly pious, she acts as agent among her own people, and has aided me much in my work. This pious mother will make another shirt to get books for her children. It was a warm day when I called on Mrs. N——; she stood in the door and told me she wanted no books. 'Times were too hard to buy any thing.' A weak voice in the room said, 'Oh mother, ask him in.' This she did very coldly, but I went in. At the window sat a pale looking girl, who though unable to set me a chair, made me feel quite at home by her kind, pleasant inquiries about my work, and we bowed at the throne of grace. The manifestations of God's presence filled the house. During this short time the mother got able to buy seven books.

"Two Sabbath-schools have been organized in the suburbs of the city, but one of them had to be given up for want of a suitable room for winter use. The other does well. The ministers all approve of and aid the tract cause, except the Catholic priest, and to many of his people I have sold books, while to others I loaned them, some of which I have taken in exchange for others, and again with others I leave a few till my next visit. Some of the Catholic families read well, and in several cases the parents permitted me to loan books to the children, which I exchange from time to time.

"The wharf is the place where we meet with more success than in families, and of eleven hundred dollars' worth of books disposed of in the place, three fifths were left on Water-street. Here is a captain, there is a mate, and yonder is a common seaman, who each in his turn wants a book or a tract. A clerk wants 'Young



Man from Home.' There is a boatman not so busy as usual: 'Good morning, captain; what books this time?' Look in my basket, 'Faith Explained' and 'Letters on Universalism.' 'Well, I'll take these to get clear of you, but you need never come to me to sell books again. I can read these through this morning.' After this as I passed along the wharf, I saw the captain sitting on the side of his boat reading, while three of his men sat listening. 'Well, captain, how are you pleased with your books?' 'This one about faith is a first-rate thing. I hav'n't read the other yet. I heard *Archer* preach last year about faith, and I thought I would try and get religion, but I hav'n't yet.' 'What books to-day?' 'Fountain of Life.' 'Is that a good book?' 'Yes, and here is the mate of it, 'Method of Grace.' 'I'll buy them books, and try to read more and quit swearing.' Here is a man rolling turpentine barrels out of the water where it is more than knee deep, and there he stands to look at a 'Testament and Psalms with Notes,' 'Line upon Line' and 'Precept upon Precept' for his children. He is a poor man; gave him some tracts to carry home. An inspector says, 'Do you notice how the people have quit swearing, since you began to distribute books and tracts?' Yonder are six men on a raft getting breakfast, two of them are pious fathers. Eat a piece of corn-bread and fat meat with them, and then sell \$4 worth of books. These go seventy-five miles. To-day was on nine large and five small vessels; conversed with forty-eight persons, thirteen of whom were profane, twenty-seven moral and respectable, and apparently pious. Sales, \$8 20. To-day dined with Captain D——; he is a pious man, who is here frequently. To-day visited twenty-one families: thirteen had good libraries, six had few good books, two had no Bible; fifteen of the mothers pious, and seventeen of the children church-members. One of these mothers is a tract distributor, and two of them Sunday-school teachers. Visited ten families, of five different communions. Sold books to all, and think all Christians meet at the same throne of grace. Saturday visited thirteen vessels, conversed with forty men; eight appear pious, twenty-six moral, and six very profane. One captain told me he wanted no books, he had no time to read, but his cook was so good a man that he did all the reading and praying on the vessel.' 'Then you think there is such a thing as being pious?' 'Certainly I do. No man can go on a voyage with yon man, and not be convinced of that fact.' 'I would like to converse with him, sir, with your permission.' 'Certainly,' and the captain kindly walked with me to the galley, and told the steward who I was and what had brought me aboard; and while the men stood around my basket as I read over the titles of its contents, the German cook pointing to my basket exclaimed, 'Chesus Grise in dere, and Chesus Grise up dere!' and clasping his hands on his breast, 'Chesus Grise in here too.' This simple Christian eloquence had a great influence on us all. The captain bought a bunch of books, and gave one to each of his men, and turning to me said in a familiar way, '*That is our Christian.*'

"Captain B—— is not a professor of religion, but he has a pious mother, and he retains a regard for religion. He says, 'I always allow my men fifteen minutes in the morning and fifteen in the evening for their private devotions, and no man has a more orderly crew than mine. Always ready.' This morning go aboard a vessel from Calcutta, manned by a crew of colored men, except the captain. Here I saw the good effects of missionary effort; all quiet, all able to read, all had money, and all bought books, and one of the mates got a lot of books for his Sabbath-school. Another twelve Testaments, and another twelve Tract Primers. Thus they showed the great worth of instruction. Here is Captain J——; he is a pious man and loves to read a good book. He has bespoke a copy of *Pilgrim's Progress*, *Saints' Rest*, and *Atonement*. Next is Captain ——, who leaves to-morrow for Marseilles. He is not a pious man, but he wants the 'Great Reformation,' and

four or five other books. Here on the wharf you meet a countryman. He has nine children and is a poor man. While talking about his family and the importance of religious instruction, you are lotting off his ten books for \$2 50. Do you hear that young man how he is swearing at the drayman for taking the wrong box? We will wait a little, and give him *The Swearer's Prayer*, and ask him if his mother was not a good woman, and if *she* taught him to swear? Now he is reading the tract. Yes, here is *Bill Martin*; he wants the *big Saint's Rest* for his father. Thus we can spend a day or two each week, besides visiting fifty families, and going through the mills and workshops distributing tracts.

"Here we must stop work and take the cars, and go to Charleston, South Carolina, to attend the Convention. Find a box of books there; get a basket and start out through the city; soon sell all the fine large works; meet the brethren for prayer. Hear the sermon by Dr. Worcester—engage in the immediate business of the Convention. Listen to the Christian experience of the brethren, and hear of the destitution of our Southern country, and many facts that show the capacity of the Tract Society to meet those wants through the agency of colporteurs. Hear the remarks and prayers of the city pastors. Experience the kind hospitality of the citizens. Leave under a grateful sense of the goodness of God, and a deeper conviction of the importance of colportage to meet the wants of our growing yet destitute population; and return in safety to my field to commence anew to labor for Christ.

"QUARTERLY REPORT—To-day, December 4th, had a very busy day on the water. Here on a raft I find the man who bought a dollar's worth of books for his children, through the aid of which two of them learned to read. He got four books to-day. Met also the converted Catholic, who now rejoices in the liberty he feels while reading the New Testament and Baxter's Call. See the man who ten days back bought \$2 worth of books for his wife. He cannot read, but he got them for her. He tells me that when he took them home, and his wife got to reading, she and his children began to cry; so he thinks he will not get them any more this time. Here too is the boatman that wants a *big Saints' Rest* for his mother, but his hands are too dirty to touch it now. Take dinner with the captain and his men on the flat, and after they have washed their fingers, sell them eight books. This evening had prayer-meeting at the seamen's boarding-house. This is always an interesting time. Let us go aboard the schooner *L—*; went to see the mate, who had lain sick at the home when here a month ago. He was then very impatient and profane. We urged on him the importance of religion, and gave him a book and a few tracts, which he took with indifference, and reluctantly said he would read them, but God has touched his heart; he met me kindly, asked what books I had, and remarked he would not live long; 'and, sir, you know I am a poor sinner. I want to get some good books and read, and try to quit swearing, for I know I am not ready to die. Give me the worth of that \$3 in books, and let one be a Bible. You pick them for me, you know what sort I need to read.'

"Monday, 11th. Go into the counting-houses—rainy. A man who never goes to church followed me from one to another and heard all that was said, and looked at the books and tracts left, but had nothing to say. At length when I went into a mill he left me, but on my way home he called me round the corner. 'Sir, I've been watching you ever since you offered me them tracts last spring, and I have been after you all day, to see what you were doing. I don't want any of your books. I am a poor, wicked, lost man. I might have got religion once, but I can't now. Here, take this money, and when you go home pick out as many little books as it will buy, and lay them away to give to the poor children on Christmas; but be sure you don't tell any body who gave you the money. Good-by.' To-day sell my last Testament with Notes.

"Wednesday, 13th. Get a new supply of books. Send a good lot of reading to — with Captain P—— and crew. To-day meet Captain F——, a Universalist. He was pleased with D'Aubigné, which he bought, with three or four other books.

"January, 1855. Commence this month among the workshops, on the railroad, and at the foundries. These open up a wide and interesting portion of my field. The foreman gives me liberty to go through the shops, and sets an hour for me to be there with my books, so the work is not hindered.

"Tuesday, 11th. A man from the country wants a fine Testament with Notes. Another something for his children. Another some books for the Sabbath-school. Another the Pilgrim's Progress. Another the Great Reformation. Another one of each juvenile work I had. A lady wanted \$10 worth of books for a Sabbath-school library. After dark an old, infirm lady came to my room to get books for her Sabbath-school. She got eighty books, for which she gave me cents and half dimes. Surely she hath done more than them all. *She is a woman of prayer.* February was spent in a similar way, but the greater part of it I spent at Charleston; where besides the business of the Convention I was able to visit 100 families, and dispose of some \$90 worth of books."

#### REPORT OF MR. G. S.

"Some families in this county are very well supplied with good books, but very many are destitute, and among the poor grants are gratefully accepted. I meet with warm friends occasionally who appear gratified to aid me in my work; while others show open opposition, and would have no books. One extremely cold night I stopped at a house and asked for lodgings. I was roughly refused. As it was a long way to another house I told my business, and begged leave to get shelter. The man said he cared nothing about my books. I offered to pay him, for I really did not know where to go. He said angrily, 'Stay, then.' I did so, showed my books to the family and talked much to the man, and prayed with them after reciting a portion of Scripture, for his Bible was so defaced I could not *read* in it. In the morning we had more conversation and prayer, and when I asked for my bill he said I owed him nothing. If he had done any thing for me or the cause I was engaged in, he was glad to accommodate me. I could relate many such instances."

#### REPORT OF MR. W. J. W. C.

"During the past year I was enabled to spend ten months in going from house to house talking, praying, and scattering printed truth as an humble colporteur. Much of this time I have toiled through heat and cold, wet and dry, and frequently late at night; but in all I felt that God was with me, giving me access to the hearts of the people, and blessing my labors to the good of my own soul, and I trust also to others.

"In the ten months I have visited 1,848 families, talked on personal religion, or prayed with 1,650, of whom 104 were without the Bible, 290 destitute of all religious books except the Bible, and 201 habitually neglecting public worship; sold nearly 3,000 volumes, worth \$558 39; and gave away about 1,000 volumes, worth \$158 82; also received donations for the tract cause amounting to \$1,052 60. Notwithstanding the ignorance, wickedness, and fatal error I have met with, yet I have not been treated rudely by a single family; all have shown me kindness and respect, and seemed to realize readily that the true object of my visit was to do them good.

"In revisiting families I find that at least three-fourths of the books I left have



been read, and it is truly encouraging to witness the manifest increased interest in reading; it is especially very marked with the young. Our people in North Carolina are becoming fully ready for the labors of the colporteur, and wherever he goes in the faithful discharge of his duties, he will find but few who understand his work that will oppose or discourage him, because they see it is God's work, carrying the joyful message of a crucified and interceding Jesus to *every* family.

"During the first three months I labored mostly in the towns of Fayetteville and Wilmington. Both of these places are highly favored with good and generally well-filled churches, an excellent ministry in the different churches, and promising Sabbath-schools; also flourishing day-schools; and, as would be supposed, an intelligent, enterprising, and generous people. But on going thoroughly through the streets, lanes, and suburbs among the poor and ungodly, I found a great many in a deplorable condition in body, mind, and soul, as the following statistics and facts will show. In Fayetteville I visited all as I came to them, but in Wilmington I labored mostly among the higher class. Visited, talked on personal religion, or prayed with 548 families in Fayetteville, of whom 181 were destitute of all religious books but the Bible; fifty-four were destitute of the Bible, and ninety-nine habitually neglecting the house of God. Sold 895 volumes, in value \$202 84; and gave away 243 volumes, in value \$45 52. Visited, in Wilmington, 346 families, of whom six were destitute of all religious books except the Bible, four were destitute of the Bible, and nine habitually neglected church. Sold 175 volumes, in value \$35 83; and granted fifty-five volumes, in value \$10 77.

"One evening I found four families within three hundred yards of three churches, who went to church on an average once in five years; two of the daughters, over twelve years old, had never heard a sermon or prayer. All promised to attend church, and I have since seen three of them out. Found a man with a family, who had been teaching school about twenty years, who never owned a Bible; he had no part of the Scriptures in his house when I visited him, but had owned a New Testament. In one day I visited eleven families; found seven of them without the Bible, and not a single other religious book. The average of their attending church was once in four years, and among them I found three fathers, two mothers, four sons, and two daughters, all down drunk. I went in and spoke kindly to them. Some of them said, 'We are not fit for any body to come to see us.' I told them, as God loved them well enough to be yet merciful to them, surely we could love them enough to come and talk to them about that mercy. I talked and prayed with them all. The next day, according to promise, I revisited them, and found them tolerably sober. After showing the evil of their course upon their bodies and souls, all but two agreed to quit drinking; and they invited me to come and see them and help them all I could, for, said they, 'We know it will be hard work.' I accordingly did so, and not one that promised to quit, drank any liquor the two weeks I was with them.

"In two families I found eight promising children in an ignorant, destitute condition, who expressed anxiety to learn to read. I gave them books and taught them a while myself, and got their consent to start to Sabbath-school, although so badly clothed. I made known their case to a good man, who aided me in getting \$6 50, which I laid out in clothing for these children; I then engaged two pious ladies to visit them every week, and go with them to school. I met with a boy of seventeen years, who said he had never heard a sermon or prayer until that day. He stated that his mother never went to church, and he always staid with her. He moved near town from J— county about one year ago. In another neighborhood I found five families destitute of the Bible and all other

religious books; but one among them could read. One family had not been to church in eighteen months, the second in two years, the third and fourth in four years, and the fifth in nine years. I was informed that frequently fathers, mothers, and children were all drunk together, and that a man had been stabbed in one of these drunken frolics a few days before. Some of these children said, 'I wish there was no liquor for father and mother to drink and give to me.' All of them were glad to get books. Some promised to start to Sabbath-school, and others said they would go if they were not so ragged, but they would try to learn in their new books somehow. I taught one most of the alphabet; also two of the mothers, on a second visit. Only two of these parents would agree to go to church, but all were willing for their children to go and be taught. Some poor wretched persons remarked, that the rich and religious families around them were visited, talked, and prayed with, but no one ever came in to talk and pray with them; and an old lady added, that her book said Christ came to be the physician of the sick, not of the whole, and to call sinners, and not the righteous. Several godly persons are commencing to visit, talk, read the Scriptures and tracts, and pray with these poor, degraded, ignorant families every Sabbath morning, and get their children in a Sabbath-school, which I furnish with books gratis; and also to meet them all Sabbath evenings in a school-house, to talk and pray with them; to which they say they will go bare-footed, or bare-headed, as the case may be. Found a respectable man about thirty years old, with a family, living within fifty yards of a Bible depository, who never owned a Bible. I supplied him and had several talks with him, and he is now quite concerned about his soul. A good man promised to visit him. In each of these towns is work enough for a faithful colporteur all the time. Every minister in both places bid me a hearty God speed. And I shall ever recur to the kindness, advice, and ready aid afforded me by these men of God, with the greatest pleasure and gratitude.

"During the second quarter I was enabled to visit, talk on personal religion, or pray with 526 families, of whom 37 were destitute of all religious books but the Bible, 11 destitute of the Bible, and 32 habitually neglecting the house of God; aided in holding 17 religious meetings; sold 939 volumes, worth \$200 19, and gave away 343 volumes, worth \$49 59.

"About 400 of these families I visited a year ago, and it is highly gratifying to see the improvement that so many have made in obtaining knowledge, and the manifest disposition to continue improving. Many who then only took a 'Tract Primer' at ten cents, on my second visit bought from one to four dollars' worth. In one neighborhood three mothers and two fathers, besides several children, have learned to spell and read from this precious little volume. And in another neighborhood there were thirty-two children over seven years old who then knew not the alphabet, and most of them never heard a sermon or prayer; all of these now know the alphabet, many of them can spell in one and two syllables, and some of the oldest, twelve and fifteen years old, now begin to read, and are able to answer most of the questions in the first catechism. I was also forcibly struck at their asking me so many questions about God and heaven. As there is no church near for this people to attend, there will in a short time be a good house erected, in which to have a Sabbath-school and regular preaching. Several experienced persons five miles off, have consented to go and aid in this Sabbath-school. How delighted these children are at this arrangement. Five mothers and two fathers of these children promised to go to this school to learn to spell and read, two of whom learned most of the alphabet on my last visit.

"After being kindly received by an obscure and destitute family, I had a pleasant talk with the father, mother, and little children, the oldest about nine,

and then gave them the first Bible they ever owned, and also the 'Primer,' from which I began to read and talk, and soon each one said, 'I wish I could read.' Learning from them that they once could spell, I drew near them and spent some time spelling with them and instructing them to read. After reading a chapter from their new Bible and praying with them, that mother with tears in her eyes said, 'Yours is the first religious visit ever made to our house, and that is the first prayer ever made in the hearing of our children. I want you to come to see us often, for we'll be glad to see you if we are wicked people.' They had not been to church in two years. Since my visit I have seen the husband at preaching twice; and he, his wife, and oldest child are now being instructed to spell and read by an individual of piety and intelligence.

"I have aided in forming two promising Sabbath-schools in very destitute sections. Two of the scholars are M—— and A——; aged sixteen and fourteen. The mother of these children I found drunk; also her child A——, who was lying on the floor in one corner pillowed with an *oven-lid*. I found M—— had a good mind and fine disposition, and seemed deeply grieved at her condition, not being able to spell or read, and seldom ever having been at church. I found several others near by in nearly as destitute condition. Aid was afforded them in preparing for Sabbath-school, and on the second Sabbath they all walked together to the school in nice order and fine spirits. How striking is the contrast in the case of A——, who two weeks previous was lying drunk, pillowed with an *oven-lid*; but now is seen walking steadily, with combed hair, clean face and hands, neat new clothes, to the Sabbath-school to learn about Jesus. A young minister of much promise recently said to me about as follows: 'Sir, I entertain feelings of lasting gratitude for you, regarding you as an instrument, in God's hands, of bringing me into the ministry. For when there was a sore struggle as to my taking up this cross, I went to where your books were spread out, and heard you speak of the perishing hundreds and scarcity of laborers, which rested with weight on my mind; and I bought D'Aubigné's 'History of the Reformation,' the reading of which deepened my impressions, so that before I had closed the first volume I was filled with the spirit that fired Luther's soul, and I at once hung my all upon the cross of Christ as his minister.'

"At a recent meeting many have been hopefully converted. One was a fine young lady, who says that my visit to her father's house, about seven months ago, afforded the means of her awakening. She soon after my visit made known her feelings and purposes to five of her associates, all of whom covenanted with God to seek salvation, and they have all now found pardon and peace.

"The female Tract distributors of Raleigh are truly devoted to their 'work of faith and labor of love,' in leaving a tract monthly with every family in the city, talking with, aiding, encouraging, and instructing such as are in need of it. It is highly gratifying to know that they are generally very kindly received, and that their labors are highly appreciated by the citizens and owned and blessed of God. A young man of standing recently said to me, 'The tract on ardent spirits, distributed by the Female Tract Society, was placed in my hands, which I read, and it fully convinced me of my ruinous course, and I determined to abandon the use of liquor entirely as a beverage; which I have done up to the present moment, and shall continue to do so.' This tract has also been the means of reforming a dissipated young man in the country, to whom it was sent by a friend. A prominent man told me that he intended to be a standing colporteur, to keep on hand and distribute that tract written by Dr. Edwards, and I let him have a good supply. A family of high standing, who made fashionable use of liquors, told me that this tract had convinced them of the great error in using it even in that way.



The tract, 'A Visit to your Family,' has been the means of a father commencing family prayer. And a young man said, 'I never had such views of eternity, my approach to it, and my foolishly spent time, as since I read the tract, 'Serious Thoughts on Eternity,' distributed by the ladies.'

"In revisiting families, it is cheering to witness the increased concern with parents correctly to educate their children. In many of the humblest log-cabins in the most obscure places, do I frequently hear it earnestly said, 'I am determined to educate my children, if I never give them a cent besides.' As I approached the house of a widow, her grandchild E——, fifteen years old, ran to me exclaiming, 'O, Mr. C——, I am glad to see you again, that I may tell you how I feel, and thank you for your talk to me about my soul and the good tracts you gave me when you were here before. Then I was a wicked child, and should have been lost for ever if I had died, but now I feel Jesus precious to my soul, and would not be afraid to die if it was God's will. I want you and grandma to help me praise the Lord.'

"On Sabbath morning I visited a Sunday-school in a place where iniquity abounded a few years since. I went in time to witness their entire exercises, and a more interesting scene I have seldom if ever beheld in my life. The government of the superintendent, and the attention and instruction of the teachers, were of the most pleasant and effectual character. The children were all quiet, deeply interested in reciting their good lessons and hearing the explanations given. I here found fifty of 'The Pictorial Tract Primers' in use, and the superintendent said, 'This book is just the right thing for interesting and instructing children. All are delighted with it.' And a mother here remarked, 'So simple, tender, and touching are the answers in the catechism of the Tract Primer, that my son John, though not quite six years old, is so delighted with and impressed by them that frequently he is affected to tears while I am teaching him the lesson, and he will then say, 'Ma, I must be a good boy, for the Lord is so great and good.' This school has increased from forty-three to eighty-seven scholars since its celebration on the 4th of July last. One of the superintendent's plans for increasing his school is, to give to him or her who brings in a new scholar a nice picture tract, and one to the new scholar. This gets the whole school interested and at work.

"I gave a tract called 'The Fool's Pence' to a moderate drinker thirteen months ago, and he at once gave up the use of ardent spirits and loaned the tract to his neighbor, who read and loaned it again, and in this way it has passed through eighteen families, and by it thirteen persons have been induced to give up the use of alcoholic drinks as a beverage.

"I have been forcibly struck and greatly encouraged by hearing professors of religion speak of the happy effects produced on their minds and hearts from reading the tract volumes. Some have been thoroughly awakened to their Christian duties, and in the performance of duty they testify that they have enlarged views of God, new love for him, and increasing concern for the spread of the gospel and the conversion of sinners. Many of them have requested me to give them an opportunity to contribute annually to the Tract Society, assuring me that their prayers should ascend daily for God's blessing to attend all its efforts and instrumentalities. A travelling minister recently said, 'I have been through neighborhoods where you have scattered books, and your books are doing vast good. They are getting people to read who read not before; and they are getting many to think and talk in a way they seldom did before; and they are getting light where there was gross darkness before.'

"Recently a gentleman came to me in the street and said, 'My heart is filled with joy to overflowing this morning, and I wish to speak with you about it. Since I have been trying to serve God, my dear wife has strongly opposed me.'

But for the last six months she has received and read a tract monthly, from the 'Female Tract Society,' which seemed to make her serious, and occasionally she has gone to church. On last Sunday she went to church twice, and at night she was much distressed and unwilling to retire; I asked her to make known her mind and feelings to me. She seemed to hesitate a moment, and then said, with streaming eyes, 'Oh, I am such an awful sinner. What shall I do? I have opposed your praying in our family, and I have never heard you pray. I do not want to lie down to-night without hearing you pray, and pray for me.' I at once got my family together, and for the first time tried to pray in public; and in the discharge of this duty my soul has been abundantly blessed, and my wife is yet anxiously inquiring for salvation.' This lady has since been hopefully converted to God.

"Most of November I was on a visit to West Tennessee, where colportage has done and is yet doing great good. I was greatly strengthened and encouraged by spending a few days with brother T. J. Terry, colporteur of Henry county. May the Lord long spare his useful life. I also met with other colporteurs by the way, who succeeded well in getting travellers to take good books and tracts to read instead of novels. A fine-looking gentleman came to me on the cars and purchased some tracts. He seemed unusually glad to get them, and after he had distributed some he took a seat with me and stated that whenever he saw tracts his gratitude to God was newly stirred, for it was a tract given him by a colporteur between Philadelphia and New York that was instrumental in awaking him and bringing him to Christ, the sinner's friend. May we all take fresh courage in working for God, who ever works for us.

"The two months I labored in the fourth and last quarter, afforded me much encouragement and instruction. A few weeks since a man came to me wishing to get a Bible, and stated that I visited him about a year ago and talked to his wife about her soul, which she treated lightly, and would not then consent for him to get a Bible, pretending to regard it as being nothing but man's work, deceiving the world. He informed me that in a few months after my visit she was deeply afflicted, and while lying upon her bed, she read 'Religion and Eternal Life,' which I placed in her hands on leaving, and God blessed it in deeply convicting her and enabling her to find Christ precious to her soul.

"I recently called to see two families whom I first visited two years ago, and found in each four sensible children. By the intemperance of the fathers both the families had been reduced to the lowest degradation, and almost starvation. My first visit seemed to effect no good with these drunkards; but seeing their families were interested and needed attention, I repeated my visits, and got other pious friends to go with me. In a few months both the mothers became awakened, one by the blessing of God upon 'James' Anxious Inquirer,' and the other by 'Come to Jesus.' And their earnest pleadings for mercy deeply affected their husbands, and caused them to abandon the use of ardent spirits; and now they are sober, moral, industrious, and respectable citizens. Both now live in good white houses, furnished with plain, neat, and comfortable furniture, and are enjoying peace and plenty. One of the mothers has been hopefully converted, and the other is yet striving for the blessing.

"A lady of high standing, who has been sorely afflicted, writes, 'Please see if you have the two tracts, 'Come to Jesus' and 'It is I.' They are books I desire to own, for they have given me more comfort than every thing else I have read, except the Bible. I wish to have three copies of each.'

"I spent the most of February in Charleston, South Carolina, attending a convention of colporteurs, agents, and members of the American Tract Society from

six different states. Christians from eight different denominations were here assembled to talk and pray together, to get their lamps in a stronger and brighter flame by the Holy Ghost. God's people being here met in God's name alone, to get God's blessing to enable them properly to do God's work, his promise was verified most clearly and powerfully, *for God was with them* owning and blessing them; and all, all was harmony and love, and they were enabled to realize most joyfully that all Christians are one in Christ Jesus.

"Most of the churches in the city were opened to us, and in the sessions of the convention and public meetings held in the various churches, the principles and objects of the Tract Society were fully and satisfactorily made known, and its adaptation to the present wants of our country, in carrying light everywhere, was strikingly set forth and deeply impressed. The people of Charleston did a noble part in contributing to the support of this work. A number of persons gave each \$150, the salary of a colporteur. Mr. E. L. Kerrison agreed to devote his time to the superintendence of this work in South Carolina gratis. May the Lord give us such a man in North Carolina.

"The hospitality and marked kindness shown us by the people of Charleston, especially those families who gave us such comfortable and happy 'homes,' will cause us to remember them most gratefully, and, I trust, earnestly to bear them up to a throne of grace, until that grace shall finally bring us to meet at that throne where all who will now come to Jesus shall meet and dwell with him and holy angels eternally."

## EXTRACTS FROM REPORTS OF COLPORTEURS IN SOUTH CAROLINA.

### REPORT OF MR. R. W. T.

"My field embraces the mountain regions of South Carolina. The mass of the people are poor, hence my sales were small and grants proportionally large. My work has been abundantly blessed. Many who are now burning and shining lights, date their convictions to reading the Society's volumes. Some remarkable revivals of religion, resulting in large accessions to the church, have occurred through the same means. On commencing the work, I met with much opposition. Sectarians openly opposed it, but all prejudice is giving way, as a correct understanding of the Society's object becomes more general, and many ministers, of different denominations, cordially coöperate in the work.

"This is a very important field, embracing three districts, for each one of which there should be a colporteur. In G—— district the Society's friends made up the salary of a colporteur. South Carolina is behind her sister states in this enterprise only because sufficient efforts have not been made in its behalf.

"During this quarter I have had much to encourage me in my work. Many who bought books have been the subjects of reviving grace, while others are inquiring the way of salvation. I sold \$5 worth of books to a very wicked young man, advising him to read them carefully. When I next saw him he was awakened, and is now a member of the church and a Christian, I hope.

"The good the tract-books are doing throughout this country cannot be expressed. My soul is sometimes made to rejoice with joy unspeakable, on witnessing the return of so many prodigals. I could effect larger sales by overlooking the poor, but this I dare not do. I have witnessed more good results among this class than any other.

"Our town councils generally prohibit the sale of ardent spirits. Destitution



of the word of God is of rare occurrence now in families; I supplied the destitute chiefly the first year I labored. I still perceive great need of circulating evangelical books. I find many who are very ignorant of the plan of salvation. Many, also, have been led, step by step, from this state of ignorance and blindness to rejoice in the hope of a blessed immortality by reading the Tract Society's books. Others are still in a course of training who, I hope, will soon find peace in believing. Some very aged persons have become the subjects of converting grace by reading the works of Baxter, Alleine, and James. Sometimes I am very much discouraged by not being able to sell my books. Once I travelled three days without selling a single book. Scarcity of money, however, was the cause.

"While reviewing the operations of the last year, I recall many incidents calculated to gladden the Christian's heart. In one neighborhood containing thirty-five or forty families, I found nearly one-third destitute of the Bible, and but few religious books among them. Many neglected preaching, and profaned the Sabbath. Three hundred volumes were sold there, thirty persons were added to the church, and they have now a flourishing Sabbath-school. In another neighborhood of twelve families, six were destitute of the Bible, and had no religious books. They were supplied with both, and are now a reading people, and solicit more books. Five dollars' worth of books were disposed of to one gentleman, who, with his wife, was converted through the reading, and both have united with the church. James' Anxious Inquirer was the means of the conversion of an aged gentleman, and his wife is now an anxious inquirer.

"The great moral improvement throughout this country is so apparent, that many persons formerly hostile to the Tract cause, have become its ardent advocates, and revivals of religion have been produced by the books circulated. I gave the Anxious Inquirer to a poor wicked man. It proved the means of his conversion, and he and his wife joined the church in a time of manifest lukewarmness. The circumstance raised the entire membership to action; special meetings were held, and thirty persons were added to the church. The work did not stop there. Neighboring churches caught the spirit: to one, forty members were added, to another, twenty.

"I called on a gentleman of 75 to talk with him of his soul's interest. He was very ignorant, and indifferent on the subject. I labored hard to touch a tender chord, and finally succeeded. He said this was the first token he had received in seventy-five years that any man cared for his soul, and asked me to pray for him. Can you realize my emotions at that moment? A gray-headed sinner, tottering on the verge of time, awakened by a single appeal! I gave him 'Come to Jesus,' and told him he was not far from the foot of the cross, and gave him some directions. He has given evidence of being a changed man. Although very poor, he has purchased several books. The half is untold."

#### REPORT OF MR. M. S. C.

"I reached my field of labor November 20, 1854. Made the acquaintance of the most active church-members and ministers, *all* of whom said they were glad to see the good work going on, and that there was great need of missionary labor; but very *few* evinced a desire to offer me even a 'cup of cold water.' I found them distracted by sectarianism; their hearts seemed fixed on *their* church, rather than on *Christ's*.

"I was told that among the poorer classes I would find many wicked, not wilfully, but through ignorance; but among the illiterate I was, with few exceptions, gladly welcomed, and as I scattered the seed of eternal life among them, I trust some reached good ground. My first visit was made on the main street of A—

village, within two hundred yards of the Bible depository. I found two families in a house, neither of the women could read 'good,' and neither knew of a Bible about the house. One of them said she was a member of the church; had lived in the village three years, and had been sick a great portion of that time, but none of the brethren or sisters had visited her, though she had sent word for them to do so. With a word of comfort and an exhortation to trust all with God, I left some tracts and volumes. I afterwards called at the depository and obtained a Bible for them which I delivered in person, and was warmly thanked.

"I next called at the house of a very intelligent lady. She sent word that she did not wish to purchase any books. I returned, in reply, that it was immaterial whether she purchased books or not, but if she had a moment's leisure I would like to call her attention to the works and objects of the Tract Society. She then invited me in and looked over the books with much interest, bought several volumes, and asking her to examine the catalogue, which I always kept with me, she desired me to bring her the Afflicted Man's Companion; calling the next day to leave it, she subscribed for the Messenger. Afterwards I was received frequently, in the same way, and met with like success. Same day called on a widow who was 'rich though poor,' and with her 'mite' she purchased Pilgrim's Progress.

"Nov. 25th, visited six families, three of them irreligious. They received me kindly, and seemed anxious to hear the gospel. I have never felt greater joy or serenity of mind than while endeavoring to turn their attention to things which are a savor of 'life unto life.' Of these families the most intelligent, possessing in abundance the things of this world, was without a Bible. The husband was an enterprising young man; the wife, the daughter of wealthy parents. They conversed freely about the eternal interests of the soul, and purchased several volumes. On leaving, I gave him Baxter's Call, which he promised to read; he also said he would get a Bible the first opportunity that presented itself.

"Nov. 27. Met a lady imbued with Universalism. After an interesting conversation, she bought ten volumes; among them, The Child's Paper for 1853. I remarked that I had a tract I wished her to read. 'You must not give me any thing which would disturb my belief,' she replied. 'I would not leave any book that would be injurious to you,' I answered; 'and this, I think, points out the true way of life, which we should all seek, should we not?' 'Yes,' she returned, 'and I'll read it.' Afterwards called on some poor families who had been in the village but a short time. One said they had not attended church since they had moved from the country, and they thought the people did not want *them* to go into their nice churches. I assured them that they would be welcomed, and left some tracts.

"Nov. 29. Made more visits and fewer sales than yesterday. Had several interesting conversations. At one house the husband seemed to show but little respect for my calling. Pointing to the Bible which lay on the table between us, I said, 'You revere this book?' 'Oh, yes.' 'You believe there is a state of eternal happiness or misery?' 'Yes.' 'Are you satisfied with your present condition and prospects for that state?' 'Well, if I do right and commit no special sin, I reckon I am safe enough.' 'You say you believe the Bible; do you remember the account of the young man who asked Christ the way of eternal life?' I narrated it, and added, 'It is not said he reached the kingdom of heaven.' Hesitatingly he replied, 'That does seem to be against me, and I suppose I must sell what I have and give to the poor.' 'Not necessarily,' I answered, 'but you should let no earthly object separate you from the love of Christ.' Before leaving I gave him Baxter's Call, which he said he would read and pray for a blessing on it. A few days after, he stopped me as I passed his store. He paid me for the book, and said he had been reading it. 'Well,' said I, 'it teaches doctrines somewhat different

from yours, does it not?" "Yes, it does, and it is pretty nearly right." Our conversation grew very serious, and he expressed a desire to make his peace with God.

"At another house I met with a professional gentleman who said he believed in the authenticity of some parts of the Bible. When asked if he believed the passage, 'All Scripture is given by inspiration of God,' he turned off to objections against denominational distinctions, etc. I quoted Scripture again, and added, 'There are certain passages which all may understand; for instance, 'He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned.' What is there difficult to apprehend in that?' He evaded the question, but finally bought several volumes. Gave Baxter's Call to his brother, inviting both to read it.

"Dec. 1. At one of the most elegant dwellings in the village, I met a lady on the verandah. Stating my object, I handed her some tracts, which she haughtily refused, saying she did not desire such things. Called on a Roman-catholic family, the lady said I could use my pleasure about leaving tracts. Of course my pleasure was to leave a few. She would not examine my books.

"Dec. 6. This forenoon met with good success. This afternoon have called on three families who would not allow me to exhibit my books—families too that profess to believe that the Bible contains the word of eternal life. One said she had company; I begged the favor of calling again, saying, 'I desired her to become more interested in the objects of the Society.' She gave me a negative, adding, that she was *afraid* she should become *too much interested*. Afraid of becoming too much interested in the spread of the gospel—in the salvation of the world!

"Dec. 9. In closing my visits in the village, I called at the stores and groceries. Was received kindly for the most part. I left temperance tracts and Manuals at the dram-shops. At two of these places I saw the poor, haggard victims of alcohol assembled, with their glaring eyes fastened on the fiery liquid sparkling in decanters. What indeed will be the reward of the men who deal out damnation by the glass to untutored miserable wretches? One of the bar-keepers, an intelligent-looking man, said he would read the Manual. Thus ended my labors at A——. As a general thing I was well received, especially by those in moderate circumstances, and though it frequently required much importunity to obtain the privilege of displaying the works of the Society, yet I seldom left a house without leaving some, either by sale or grant. Whenever I made a second call I was welcomed with smiles, and any new volume I had was eagerly examined. The friends of the Society expressed surprise at my success, not thinking that God was my helper. Instead of a distribution mostly gratuitous, as they had predicted, my sales, of 300 volumes, amounted to \$70.

"In G——, as at A——, I found no friend to welcome me on my arrival but brother A——, who received me with open arms. An unfortunate delay in the arrival of my books from Charleston caused me to labor to great disadvantage, as I had brought a very limited assortment with me. This is a manufacturing place, and the operatives, who form a large majority of the population, are gathered from the poor and ignorant inhabitants of the surrounding country. There are two fine churches, and their estimable pastors showed an anxiety for the spiritual interests of their respective flocks. But let my notes speak.

"Dec. 12. Called on an old lady who habitually neglected attending church. Conversed with her about the concerns of her soul, and urged her to attend preaching. She replied, 'I can hardly walk to the meeting-house.' I said, 'Would you not make an effort, if you knew there was a lump of gold at the fac-



tory which would be yours by going for it?' 'I reckon it would have to stay there, if I could not send for it.' 'Well, if going would for ever make you happy, and not going make you for ever miserable, would you not make the effort?' 'I reckon I would.' I then spoke to her of attending church as the only hope, for she could not read; and to my last query she replied, '*I reckon you 'll start me.*'

"Dec. 13. Continued my visits at *Blue Run*, and if I had been on any but an errand of mercy I should have felt *blue* enough. Frequently I found two dirty couches in a filthy room, and parents and children as filthy as their habitations, nearly all of whom gladly received my tracts and books, and frequently when I handed a tract would ask the price. When the parent could not read, there was generally a child who could read 'right smart,' or 'mighty well.' To the inquiry if they were members of any church, the reply often was, 'Yes, before I came here.' If frequently visited and encouraged, many of them might be brought into the ark of safety. May the Lord bless my humble efforts among them. My distributions have been almost gratuitous. Have received just twenty-five cents, but the promise of more.

"Dec. 14. Have met with several peculiar cases; two were sin-hardened, self-righteous old women. They, as well as many others whom I met, held that they were as well off as many in the church, though I pointed them to Christ as their exemplar. I could not but think of the inconsistency of many professing Christians, and offer the silent prayer, Good Lord give us grace that we may not be stumbling-blocks in the way of sinners. But the incident that most distressed my soul was an interview with a middle-aged man. Called on his wife in the morning and left some tracts; called again in the evening, and inquired how she liked them. Imagine my astonishment when she replied, 'My husband destroyed them.' Collecting my thoughts, I asked, 'Did he think they were hurtful, or had he other reasons for such action?' 'He said he could buy books when he wanted them.' While conversing with another lady, the husband came in. The wife looked uneasy, as I had given her a small volume which she said she would conceal from him until she had read it. Extending my hand, I saluted him as a friend. He looked sullen and morose. I immediately, in a familiar way, introduced religious subjects. After a long conversation, in which he evinced much profanity and hardness of heart, I asked him if I might pray for him. 'Not here.' 'At my room then?' 'Don't care how much you pray there.' 'May I,' I insisted, 'mention your name in prayer?' 'No; but you may pray for *that stranger who talked so to you.*' I assured him I would, and bade him farewell. I called afterwards and left a Bible, but he and his wife were absent, and, anxious as I was, I did not have an opportunity to hear from him again, but I did not forget him at the throne of grace.

"Dec. 19. The old lady whom I met yesterday, having given an account of my visit to her at several places, I met with a hearty welcome. Afterwards saw her in the street. With tearful eyes she spoke of ——'s conduct. I said, I hoped my visit would benefit her; then inquiring as to the state of her own mind, she replied, 'It don't seem as though God will forgive such a sinner, but I think I have more hope.' I gave her a few words of encouragement, and called a few days after. Talked plainly to both, neither of whom could read, and read them some awakening tracts. Found —— willing this time to lay aside her work a few moments while I engaged in prayer. The old lady seemed to possess a little more peace of mind.

"The day after my second lot of books arrived I sold \$15 worth, and had they arrived in proper time I could have disposed of the greater part of them; but as brother A—— desired me to visit B—— C. H. before leaving the work, I could

not go over the ground a second time. On my way to B—— I called at A——, and was met as an old friend. Sold some books.

“Reached B—— C. H. on Saturday night. Found more zealous friends of the cause than I had before met with. Here I met the first persons to whom the idea of my stopping at the hotel, upon expense to the Society, seemed repugnant to their feelings. I was entertained by Rev. Mr. M—— and Colonel B——, both ready to lend a hand to the advancement of the objects of the Society.

“I canvassed the village in four days. It is a wealthy and intelligent community, a majority being professional men. My sales amounted to \$35, besides subscriptions to the Messenger and Child’s Paper.

“In conclusion, permit me to say that no occupation has ever afforded me that peace of conscience and tranquillity of mind which I enjoyed during my seven week’s colportage. I would gladly have remained longer on the field had circumstances permitted, but with returning health returned the long-cherished desire to complete my collegiate studies.”

#### REPORT OF MR. W. D.

“I commenced colportage in F—— district on the 15th of January, and have visited upwards of 250 families, some of whom were very poor. Three of them destitute of the Bible, and some of them had very few religious books except the Bible. F—— is, I suppose, as well supplied with evangelical preaching as any other part of the state, but still there are portions of it where preaching is rare. Intemperance prevails greatly in some places, while in others there are temperance societies which have done much good. I called one day on a Universalist, talked a long time to him, but could not get him to buy books. However, he let his daughter buy some small volumes. Another poor man would not take any books because he could not read, but his step-son, a boy of twelve, bought a volume, and afterwards hailed me to get some more. I gave him a number of tracts, which pleased him very much.”

#### REPORT OF MR. W. R. M.

“I have labored one month and two days as colporteur, and distributed, by sale or grant, 309 volumes, amounting to \$63 80. My efforts were much confined to the mountainous parts of P—— district. Visited 263 families, 35 of whom I found destitute of religious books, and 24 destitute of the Bible. Fifteen families habitually, and others almost entirely neglect public worship. Conversed with seventy-five families on personal religion, addressed fourteen meetings, and obtained fifty-three subscribers to the Messenger and forty to The Child’s Paper. The country through which I travelled is mountainous and sparsely populated and rough. Many men and women, some in old and others in middle age, with large families, do not know the English alphabet. I was often struck with sorrow on showing my books, to hear the people say, ‘I ha’n’t no use for books, because I ha’n’t got no larnin, and can’t read.’ The larger class are poor; not only destitute of worldly substance, but of what is far more important, ‘the one thing needful.’ Some laid out their last shilling for books, and wished they had more. I distributed many Temperance Manuals in and around the grog-shops. There is not a regular bookstore in the district, but every little store keeps a few. There is a great work yet to do here, which may be accomplished by the instrumentality of the publications of your Society, in the hands of God; for I know of no other agency that would more effectually meet the necessities of the people. May the Father of mercies, through this and other means, bring these precious souls to the knowledge of the Redeemer.”









































































































































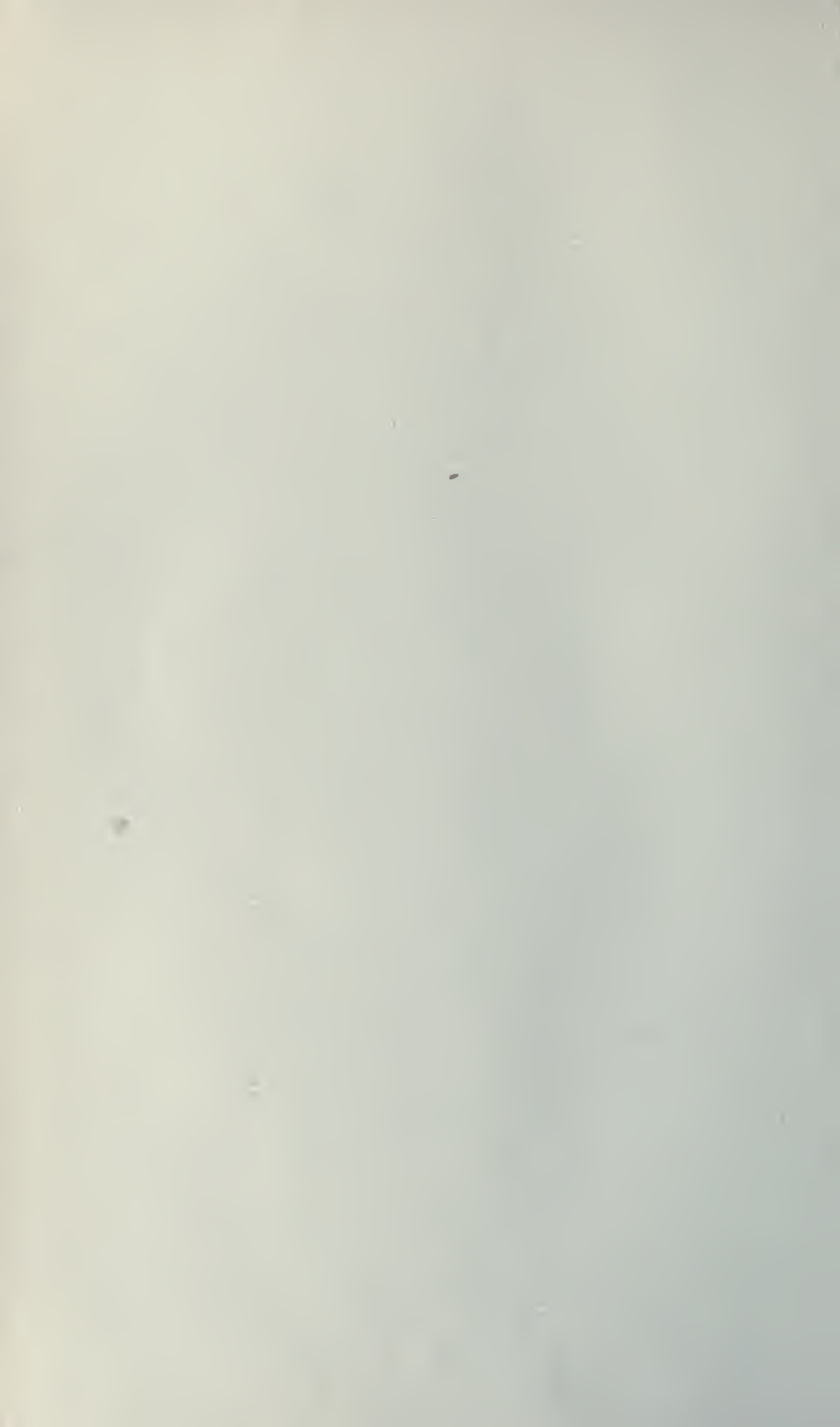
























































































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